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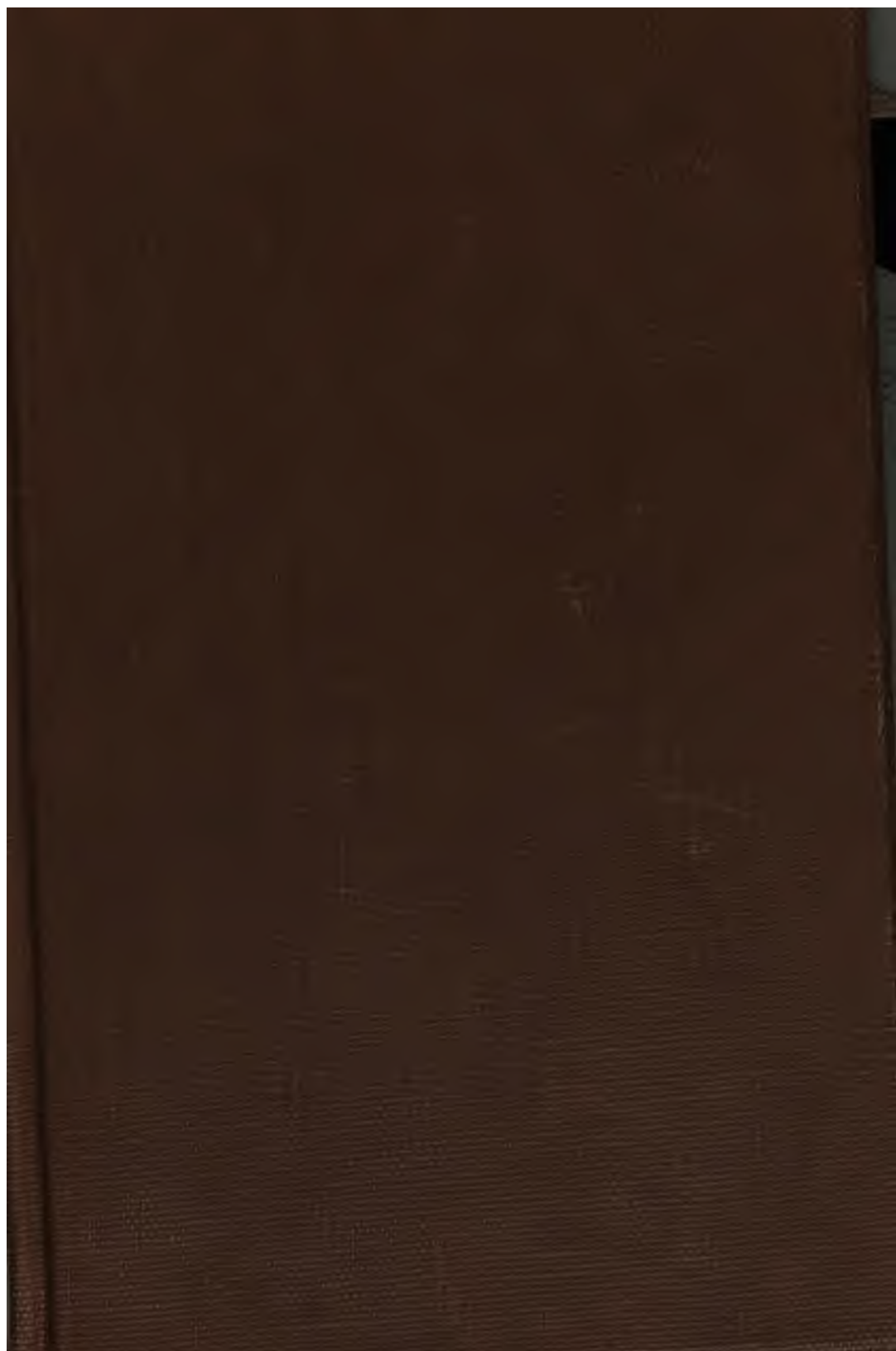
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THE
STATE OF PROTESTANTISM
IN
GERMANY,
DESCRIBED;

BEING
*THE SUBSTANCE OF FOUR DISCOURSES PREACHED BEFORE
THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE IN 1825.*

BY THE
REV. HUGH JAMES ROSE, B.D.
CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,
AND VICAR OF HORSHAM, SUSSEX.

SECOND EDITION, ENLARGED,

WITH
AN APPENDIX.

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TO
THE RIGHT REVEREND
CHARLES-JAMES,
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THE
FOLLOWING WORK

IS INSCRIBED,

AS A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE FOR MANY PERSONAL OBLIGATIONS,

AND

AS A SINCERE THOUGH FEEBLE TESTIMONY OF ADMIRATION

FOR THE TALENTS, LEARNING, AND CHARACTER

WHICH RENDER THEIR POSSESSOR AN ORNAMENT AND A BLESSING

TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THE Advertisement to the First Edition, which will be found below, will sufficiently explain the circumstances under which the following work first appeared. In the present edition I have consulted my own convenience, and, I trust, that of my readers, by changing the form and order of the work. It is very materially enlarged, and I trust that the new matter will be found to possess great interest, and to substantiate my former statements.

In an earnest desire to avoid farther controversy, I have preferred using the words of others to my own, wherever it was practicable. The reader will accordingly find very considerable extracts from the works of Schröckh, and, in the historical sketch of the earlier state of the German Church, several of some length from the recent work of Mr. Pusey.

But though I am anxious to avoid all future controversy, I cannot regret that which has already taken place respecting this work, as I feel that it has shewn the correctness of my statements. For with every disposition to cavil, my German adversaries have been unable to bring any *particular* charges of inaccuracy or misrepresentation against me. There are in good truth two points only which are of any moment to the reader or to myself. The first is the question whether the anti-christian doctrines to which I allude were taught at all in the German Protestant churches; and the second, whether they were generally taught and obtained general reception. The German replies to my work sufficiently prove that however much my adversaries may be disposed to reply to these questions in the negative, they are unable to do so. Mr. Pusey again agrees with me entirely in what I have said on these points, and the reader will find extracts from various German writers in the course of the present edition, which corroborate my statements to their fullest extent.

It has been objected to me by Professor Sack, that I have not given a chronological view of the

Rationalist writers, and that in consequence I have done many of them injustice, as the intention with which the same thing is said by different men at different periods, and the influence which it has upon the times, are very different. Although I am well persuaded that I have not done any injustice to the Rationalists by this means, I have endeavoured to obviate the objection by making out a table of the more remarkable divines of Germany, since the commencement of Rationalism. But this table is far from being as complete as I could wish, from my inability to procure the necessary information. With respect to a classification of the Rationalists, the reader will find that in my reply to Dr. Bretschneider * I have already said whatever I deemed necessary on this point.

I have added a small supplement to the work, containing some admirable essays by Stapfer, on the late state of German Protestantism, and the causes which led to it, and I would beg to refer the reader to those papers for a more complete account of the men who opposed themselves to the principles and proceedings of the Rationalists than I have given.

* Appendix, p. 86.

In concluding this advertisement, I cannot but observe that odious, painful, and disgusting as many of the details exhibited in the following work are, there is one point of view in which the consideration of the state of German Protestantism cannot fail to produce unmixed pleasure. I allude to the fact, that after sixty or seventy years of unbelief among 'so large a portion of the speculating minds of Germany,' the Germans are returning to their former firm trust in Christianity. This fact must give unmixed pleasure, I say, to every Christian, not only on account of the deep interest which he must take in every part and portion of the Church of Christ, but as an incontestible evidence both of the truth of Christianity and of its adaptation to the wants and wishes of man, and as a conclusive testimony that a religion of reason cannot satisfy the one or the other. No men ever undertook to deny the Divine origin of Christianity under circumstances so favourable for the experiment as those of the German Rationalists. The hand of power was not against them, nay, it was sometimes with them, they had possession of the learned bodies, they were masters of the clergy, they had a vast band of journals with them, they had every advantage which facilities in literature could

give, they had numbers, and wealth, and clamour on their side, they had, in a word, ample space and verge enough to work their will, if that will could have been worked. And yet, in spite of all that metaphysical and mythological researches could effect to get rid of the Divine authority of the Bible, in spite of all that sophistry, and clamour, and ridicule could effect to introduce the so-called 'religion of reason', the Bible remains where it was, and the 'religion of reason' has been rejected. For the entire, and healthful, and life-giving body of Scripture, the Rationalists sought to give us a mass of broken and desecrated fragments; from the 'consecrated fount of living love,' they sought to turn us to 'the comfortless and hidden well' of Natural Religion. But all that was holy and healthful and true in human nature, has turned away from them, and has demanded with a voice which admitted of no truce and no parley, that bread which came down from heaven, and that living water, 'of which whosoever drinketh, shall never thirst again.' The very weakness of humanity has been too strong for the advocates of Natural Religion in all the pride of philosophy, and learning, and station, and strength. Their outcry has been silenced by the still small

voice which came from the chamber of disease, the house of mourning, and the bed of death. 'Miserable comforters were they all' in the day of suffering and sorrow, and the support which they could not give, the sick and the sorrowful sought elsewhere.

These facts are worth a thousand arguments. I ask not what an Eichhorn was pleased to admit or to reject, I care not what a Wegscheider has proved or disproved, I enquire not what a Paulus believes or disbelieves, but I know that they have used their utmost efforts to convince the world that Christianity is a human invention, and that they have failed. The Bible has laughed them and their efforts to scorn. The storms and tempests of unbelief have beaten upon it with all their fury, and have beaten upon it in vain. So it hath ever been! And so it will be! Again will the clouds gather, again will the storm rage, and again will it expend itself in impotent and unavailing fury. For 'there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord.' 'The counsel of the Lord, that shall stand,' and 'the word of the Lord endureth for ever.'

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

THE following Discourses were delivered in the month of May last, in the discharge of my duty as one of the Select Preachers for the past year; and they are now sent to the Press in compliance with a very flattering suggestion from the present highly respected Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Le Blanc, and the advice of several University friends. I feel it also a duty to bring forward some proof of the heavy accusations made against a large body of the German divines, and I only regret that the deficiency of books has not enabled me to make that proof so complete as I could wish. For although some of the most noxious works are in common use among us, I am unable to obtain in this country many

which I deem necessary for illustrating the growth and progress of the opinions I have ventured to attack. In many cases I have, therefore, been unable to do more than give the references and short notes which I made last year in Germany, or which I can now obtain from Ernesti's two theological repositories. For this deficiency, and for others caused by the limits to which I was confined, by the great extent of the subject, and my own imperfect acquaintance with parts of it, I earnestly request the favourable construction of any readers which this little work may chance to gain. Should they be inclined to pursue the subject, I would recommend to them first, the '*Pragmatische Geschichte der Theologie und Religion*,' of Dr. I. A. H. Tittman of Leipsic; for although I should not say that the work is very highly esteemed in Germany, it has the merit of being compendious, and of presenting a connected view of the progress of Rationalizing opinions, while the more valuable and elaborate histories, as, for instance, that of Schröckh, rather contain detached, though very able, criticisms of the several writers. For an account of the late inclination to mysticism, I recommend a Volume called '*De Mysticismo*,' published at the Hague in 1820,

by the late lamented Professor Borger of Leyden. For the dogmatical part of the Rationalist opinions, Bahrdt's * '*Systema Theologiæ Lutheranæ Orthodoxum*,' is very convenient, as it contains in the text, the orthodox, and in the notes the Rationalist view of each dogma. The text is too copious, however, and the notes too scanty; nor do they refer to the works in which the opinions they mention are detailed. But those deficiencies are supplied in Wegscheider's '*Institutiones Theologiæ Dogmaticæ*,' which contains full references to all the most violent books of the party, and is perhaps the most recent exposé of their opinions, the last edition (the 4th) having appeared at Halle in 1824.

After I had concluded my course of Sermons, I

* It is rather curious to observe the clamour which has been raised against me for referring to Bahrdt. He, I am told, was a Theologian only at the outset of his course. The facts of the case are, that he was not only a Theologian, but actually an officiating clergyman and admired preacher, till he was deprived of his functions by an order of the Government! That occurred when he was about thirty-six or thirty-seven years of age. With what justice then he is said to have been a Theologian only in the outset of his course, as if he had attended to Theology for a year or two, or as if he had voluntarily quitted it for other pursuits, I leave others to judge.

found that the late learned Mr. Coneybeare had touched on the subject of the German Rationalizing school, in the 7th of his Bampton Lectures, but not at sufficient length to render this work superfluous *. Bishop Jebb's Primary Charge, contains (in a note) a very severe remark on the same subject; and the tendencies of these writers have also called forth some very strong and just animadversions from a learned dissenter, Dr. John P. Smith, in an useful and able work, called 'Scripture Testimony to the Messiah †.'

In conclusion, I may be allowed to say that it would give me the most serious uneasiness if any thing I have said could be construed into a want of respect for the German character in general, or of

* Let me refer also to the learned and ingenious 'Critical Essays on Genesis,' &c. by Mr. Forster of Limerick, published since the first edition of this work.

† His expressions show decidedly that in taking a fuller view of the subject, he would have spoken as strongly as I have done. He notices 'the almost general and utter dereliction of Christian faith and doctrine,' in the Rationalizing school, and says that that school reduces 'the eternal records of God's grace and wisdom to a level with the Shaster of the Bramin, or the Cyropædia of the Philosopher.' pp. 280, 281. The death of a man so learned, so judicious, and so temperate, is a heavy loss to the church.

due admiration for their pre-eminence in many of the very highest walks of literature, and their rapid progress in every art which can ennoble and dignify mankind. The student in divinity especially, who remembers his boundless debt of gratitude to their elder divines, would not be hasty in expressing a different feeling towards the nation to which they belonged. But, in truth, I have only expressed what has been said to me by every intelligent German *, with whom I conversed on the subject; and it is a source of pleasure and consolation to remember, that a

* The following extract is curious. It comes from the work of a Catholic priest, and consists of quotations from Protestant German writers. Counsellor Beckendorf says 'There is no church among his party, but merely parties, the old church is in ruins.' Boll (*Von dem Verfall und der Wiederherstellung der Religiosität*) 'The dissolution of the Protestant church is certain.' The *Hallische Literatur Zeitung* says 'That there is no Protestant church, but only now Protestant churches,' and so Dr. Planck. The *Hermes*, 'It is undecided what is the aim of the Protestant churches.' Professor Lehmann (*Ansicht und gefahr des Protestantismus*) 'One sees Protestantism, but no Protestant church.' Superintendent General Schlegel, 'The greatest part of the Evangelical churches may be asked, if they can make any pretence to the name of a Christian church.' Hohenegger's *Beleuchtung der G. von Berzevickyschen schrift, Nachrichten ueber den Zustand der Evangelischen in Ungarn*. Gran. 1825, p. 255.

remedy for such evils cannot long be wanted in a country so filled with all that is amiable in character, and distinguished in learning.

HORSHAM,
August 20, 1825.

INTRODUCTION.

It was observed to me by a very intelligent reader of the first edition of this work, that I had given no definition of the term ‘ Rationalism,’ which I so frequently used. The task is not so easy as it may at first appear. The difficulty of which I speak will be understood by a few quotations from German writers.

Staüdlin who has written expressly an ‘ History of Rationalism and Supernaturalism,’ commences it in the following words.

‘ I do not now look to the various meanings in which the word Rationalism has been used. I understand by it here only generally the opinion—that mankind are led by their reason and especially by the natural powers of their mind and soul, and by the observation of nature which surrounds them, to

a true knowledge of divine and sensible things—and that reason has the highest authority and right of decision in matters of faith and morality, so that an edifice of faith and morals built on this foundation shall be called Rationalism. It still remains undecided whether this system declares that a supernatural revelation is impossible and ought to be rejected. That notion rather lies in the word Naturalism, which however is (sometimes) used as synonymous with Rationalism. It has been well said, that Naturalism is distinguished from Rationalism by rejecting all and every revelation of God, especially any extraordinary one through certain men. This however is not the case with many persons called Naturalists both by themselves and others. Supernaturalism consists in general in the conviction that God has revealed himself supernaturally and immediately. What is revealed might perhaps be discovered by natural methods, but either not at all or very late by those to whom it is revealed. It may also be something which man could never have known by natural methods, and then arises the question, whether man is capable of such a revelation. The notion of a miracle cannot well be separated from such a revelation, whether it happens out of, on, or in men. What is revealed may belong

to the order of Nature, but an order higher and unknown to us, which we could never have known without miracles, and cannot bring under the laws of nature *.'

In Professor Hahn's late disputation at Leipsic, 'De Rationalismi, qui dicitur, vera indole, et quæ cum Naturalismo contineatur ratione †,' I find the following remarks on Staüdlin's work and the subject in general. 'In very recent times, during which Rationalism has excited so much attention, two persons especially, Bretschneider and Staüdlin, have endeavoured to point out the historical use of the

* Staüdlin, pp. 3, 4.

† I quote this pamphlet from the Evangelische Kirchen-zeitung for July 28, 1827, p. 58, and I take this opportunity of explaining why I do not keep the promise I made last year in my Appendix, of giving some account of the remarkable dispute between Professors Hahn and Krug, on occasion of his inaugural thesis. It is simply because the books have not yet arrived. So perfectly indifferent are we in England to foreign literature, that small works never come from abroad, unless specially sent for—and then, as it is a matter quite out of the common way, if a dozen pamphlets are to be got together, there is a confusion, delay and difficulty, beyond imagination. I ordered all the pamphlets on this dispute which made the greatest sensation in Germany, in the spring of 1828, and they are not yet come.

word, but both have failed. It is therefore worth while to examine the matter afresh. With respect to the Rationalists, they give out Rationalism as a very different matter from Naturalism. Röhr (the author of the Letters on Rationalism) chooses to understand by Naturalism only Materialism, and Wegscheider only Pantheism*. In this way those persons who have been usually reckoned the heads of the Naturalists, viz. Herbert, Tindal, &c. will be entirely separated from them, for they were far removed from Pantheism or Materialism. Bretschneider, who has set on foot the best enquiry on this point, says, that the word Rationalism has been confused with the word Naturalism, since the appearance of the Kantian philosophy, and that it was introduced into theology by Reinhard and Gabler. An accurate examination respecting these words gives the following results. The word Naturalism arose first in the sixteenth century and was spread in the seventeenth. It was understood to mean those who allowed no other knowledge of religion except the

* It will be seen, by extracts given below, that this ought to be, 'Röhr chuses to understand by Naturalism only Pantheism, and Wegscheider only Materialism.'

natural, which man could shape out of his own strength, and consequently excluded all supernatural revelation. As to the different forms of Naturalism, theologians say there are three; the first, which they call Pelagianism, and which considers human dispositions and notions as perfectly pure and clear by themselves, and the religious knowledge derived from them as sufficiently explicit. A grosser kind denies all particular revelation; and the grossest of all considers the world as GOD. As to Rationalism, this word was used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by those who considered reason as the source and norm of faith. Amos Comenius seems first to have used this word in 1661, and it never had a good sense. In the eighteenth century it was applied to those who were in earlier times called by the name of Naturalists.'

In a tract by a Dr. C. F. Fritzsche *, (Leipsic 1828), which is called 'De Revelationis notione Biblica,' Rationalists are defined to be 'those who even in matters belonging to religion, refer every

* This is not the author of the Commentary on St. Matthew. I have understood it is his father, but I have no knowledge of the fact.

thing to reason and its law alone;’ and it is added that ‘they were formerly called *Naturalists*, and that Knapp has followed this phraseology when he says (Vorlesungen über die Christl. Glaubenslehre, Part I, p. 31. Halle, 1827,) that “human reason is not according to the doctrine of the Bible the sole source of the truths of religion, as if man were to deduce them from nature alone. He who maintains this is a Naturalist, i. e. he will recognize only nature, partly that within himself, and partly that external nature by which he is surrounded, as the source of religious truth.”’ After giving Hahn’s account and definition of Naturalism, Fritzsche adds, ‘At present Naturalism is distinguished from Rationalism by being made either Pantheism (see Röhr in his Kritische Prediger-Bibliothek, P. III. vol. i. p. 58, where Naturalism is said to be “that mode of thinking which elevates the great One to an object of religion, and knows no spiritual power above it,”) or Materialism. This last is the notion of Wegscheider, who in his Institutiones, p. 32, (third edition,) says that Naturalism differs from Rationalism principally in this, that it derives all the effects in nature from a necessity, as it were, of nature alone, without any regard to

Divine Providence, and therefore wholly rejects all efficacy of GOD in imparting religious knowledge to men, and all revelation of all kinds *.'

These extracts (which might be multiplied to almost any extent) sufficiently shew that the word Rationalism has been used in Germany in various senses, and has been made to embrace alike those who positively reject all revelation, and those who profess to receive it. I am inclined however to believe that the distinction between these two parties is not quite so wide either as it would appear to be at first sight, or as one of them assuredly wishes it to appear. For if I receive a system, be it of religion, of morals, or of politics, only so far as it approves itself to my reason, whatever be the authority that presents it to me, it is idle to say that I receive the system out of any respect to that authority. I receive it *only* because my reason approves it, and I should, of course, do so if an authority of far inferior value were to present the system to me. This is what that division of Rationalists, which professes to

* See too Bretschneider's Handbuch, p. 46. 2d ed. Leips. 1826; and Tzschirner's Briefe Veranlasst durch Reinhard's Gestandnisse, p. 81. Leips. 1811.

receive Christianity, and at the same time to make reason the supreme arbiter in matters of faith, has done. *Their* system in a word is this :—they assume certain general principles which they ‘ maintain to be the necessary deductions of reason from an extended and unprejudiced contemplation of the natural and moral order of things, and to be in themselves immutable and universal. Consequently any thing which on however good authority may be advanced in apparent opposition to them must either be rejected as unworthy of rational belief, or at least explained away till it is made to accord with the assumed principles,—and the truth or falsehood of all doctrines proposed is to be decided according to their agreement or disagreement with those principles *.’ When Christianity then is presented to them, they enquire what there is in it which agrees with their assumed principles, and whatsoever does so agree, they receive as *true*. But whatever is *true* comes from God, and consequently all of Christianity which they admit to be true, they hold to be *Divine*. ‘ Those who are generally termed Rationalists,’

* Powell’s Rational Religion Examined, p. 49. I beg to recommend this pleasing work to all interested in the subject of our present enquiry.

says Dr. Bretschneider, ' admit universally in Christianity, a divine, benevolent, and positive appointment for the good of mankind, and Jesus as a Messenger of Divine Providence, believing that the true and everlasting word of God is contained in the Holy Scripture, and that by the same the welfare of mankind will be obtained and extended. But they deny therein a supernatural and miraculous working of God, and consider the object of Christianity to be that of introducing into the world such a religion as reason can comprehend, and they distinguish the essential from the unessential, and what is local and temporary from that which is universal and permanent in Christianity *.' There is however a third class of divines which in fact differs very little from this, though very widely in profession. They affect to allow ' a revealing operation of God, but establish on internal proofs rather than on miracles the divine nature of Christianity.' They allow that revelation

* Translation of Dr. Bretschneider's Reply by a Layman, p. 31. I have corrected the translation, as the Translator had here mistaken the sense. The ' Layman' states that he undertook the task, because Dr. B.'s work was still untranslated. It is singular that in this age of advertisements his publishers should not have known that a translation by Mr. Evanson had appeared some months before his.

may contain much out of the power of reason to explain, but say that 'it should assert nothing contrary to reason but rather what may be proved by it *.' This sounds better, but they who are acquainted with the writings of the persons thus described, know that by establishing Christianity 'on internal proofs,' they only mean the accepting those doctrines which they like, and which seem to them *reasonable*, and that though they allow in theory that revelation may contain what are technically called much above reason, yet in practice they reject the positive doctrines of Christianity, (I mean especially the doctrines of the Trinity, the Atonement, the Mediation and Intercession of our Lord, Original Sin, and Justification by Faith) because they allege that those doctrines are contrary to their reason. The difference between them and the others is therefore simply this, that while the others set no limits at all to the powers of reason in matters of faith, they set such a limit in theory but not in practice, and consequently cannot justly demand to be separated from the others †.

* See Translations of Dr. B.'s reply.

† I spoke of these various parties in the former edition as follows: 'The advocates for the supremacy of the human under-

Under these circumstances, it will readily appear that the word Rationalism has been used by the Germans

standing, to whom I allude, not content with judging of the evidences offered in support of the truth of the Christian system, proceed much farther, and first establish reason as the sole and sufficient arbiter of the truth or falsehood of the various doctrines which that system contains, the umpire from whose judgment there is to be no appeal in matters of religious controversy. First, I say, for this is indeed only the preliminary step to that long career on which they are entering. Reason, which is to be the sole judge, must, if its office be rightly bestowed, at least be *capable* of deciding on every thing offered to her examination ; that is to say, in religion thus subjected to the decision of human reason, there must be nothing which it is beyond the power of human reason to *comprehend*, for without comprehension there can be no decision. Those things in religion which to others are obscure and difficult, to those who pursue this road must be as clear as the windows of the morning. They must explain them, or explain them away. But when religion is thus placed at the mercy of reason, it is manifest that the first step will be to treat religious matters like any other science within the province of reason. Questions will arise, not only as to the value or truth of particular doctrines, but as to the meaning and scope of the system itself. It may have come down to us clogged with many human additions, and distorted by many human views. It may, perhaps, never have been rightly understood from the beginning, and may be still an unknown country to reward the labours and the penetration of future discoverers. The same methods which the natural philosopher pursues in arriving at the knowledge which he presumes he possesses of chemistry or geology, must be employed by the religious philosopher in arriving

themselves in various significations, and has been applied to classes of persons differing widely in opinion. Any attempt, therefore, to give a strict defini-

at Christian truth. Truth (according to the scientific plan of religion) as set before us in Scripture, is the raw material which is to be worked up by human ingenuity, or rather the hieroglyphic system, the solution of which is to be achieved by human penetration. The doctrines which have commanded the assent, directed the faith, and warmed the hopes of the great, the wise and the good, in every age of Christianity, may perhaps in every age of Christianity have been misunderstood, or not understood at all. The theologian must *mine* for the long hidden treasure of truth, and like the naturalist must make new discoveries, and modify his belief accordingly. When a sufficient number of facts is *discovered*, a system must be formed, to which reason can form no objection: that is to say, a system which contains nothing transcending her powers. But as the name of *Christianity* is still to be written upon this system, it must at all events profess to rest, as we have said, on the basis of Scripture; and as the words and the facts of Scripture are occasionally somewhat more refractory than the imaginations of the human heart, new systems of interpretation must be devised, and the words and facts of Scripture must change their meaning at the omnipotent command of reason, and must be made to accord with the system which her wisdom has erected. When this is impossible, portions or rather masses of Scripture must be wiped away from the canon, and branded with spuriousness and imposture. Truth must no longer be recognized by external characters, but by its coincidence with the dictates of reason. And probabilities from external circumstances must afford us no matter for thought or conviction, but the system must itself be the measure and arbiter of probabilities.'

nition of it would obviously be hazardous. I would only say that I have used the word 'Rationalists' for convenience sake, to represent that large party of men in Germany, who calling themselves Christians, have nevertheless shewn an anxious desire to get rid of all that is supernatural in Christianity, and to set aside the positive doctrines of the Gospel scheme, generally on the alleged ground that those doctrines are contrary to their reason.

If it is asked, whether they who object to these proceedings would set aside the claims of reason altogether; I answer decidedly, No. The words of Knapp on this point are very apposite. 'The reason,' says he, 'as the superior and spontaneous source of human knowledge, is that which constitutes the peculiar character of man, and by it alone is man capable of embracing any religion. Whether religious truths come from reason or revelation, they must be recognized and received by the reason, and through it influence the will. The Bible therefore speaks with deep respect of this great gift of God; it recommends search and consideration in religious matters, and consequently the use and application of the reason to the truths of religion. Without that use

man would be incapable of receiving a revelation *.' Butler has distinctly pointed out the appropriate province of the Reason with respect to a Revelation proposed to mankind. We are not to say that 'reason is no judge of what is offered to us as being of divine revelation. For this would be to infer that we are unable to judge of any thing because we are unable to judge of all things. Reason can and it ought to judge not only of the *meaning* but also of the *morality* and *evidence* of revelation. First it is the province of reason to judge of the *morality* of the Scripture, i. e. not whether it contains things different from what we should have expected from a wise, just, and good Being, but whether it contains things *plainly* contradictory to wisdom, justice, or goodness, to what the light of nature teaches us of God. Secondly, reason is able to judge, and must, of the *evidence* of revelation, and of the objections urged against that evidence †.' But when the reason is once satisfied that a professed revelation contains nothing *plainly* contradictory to wisdom, justice, and goodness, and that the evidence of its truth is sufficient, it must accept that Revelation with all the doctrines

* Vorlesungen über die Christl. Glaubenslehre, p. 31.

† Butler, Part ii. chap. 3.

which it contains. The Rationalist, in enquiring whether a doctrine presented to him is unreasonable, forgets always that the most important part of the enquiry must be in what its unreasonableness consists, and that we can never pronounce whether a proposition is unreasonable unless we have a full, clear, and distinct knowledge of the matter to which it relates. Such knowledge we assuredly have not with respect to GOD, his nature, his mode of existence, his attributes, or his moral government. Consequently, we can have no right to call our conduct *Rational* when we pronounce without hesitation that propositions which are presented to us relative to those mysterious subjects are contradictory, unreasonable, or untrue. It is idle to contend that we have any knowledge of the essential nature of the Divinity, or of the ulterior object of his dispensations ; and it must therefore be worse than idle to lay down any propositions concerning them as ‘ eternal and immutable principles of reason,’ and to reject all assertions or doctrines as untrue which do not appear to agree with those principles. Where knowledge is imperfect, seeming contradictions may not be real ones, and it cannot be reasonable to *decide* them to be so. It is *Rational*

to enquire strictly, anxiously, and rigidly, into the evidence of any religion presented to us; and we are then on our own ground, for we have faculties of judging which the evidences presented to us exactly meet. But when these faculties are satisfied, it is equally *Rational* to accept the revelation so established, however hard or mysterious may be the doctrines which it contains; especially when we know, a priori, that if it speaks to us of God or his ways at all, it must speak in a manner hard and mysterious for us with our imperfect knowledge to understand. ‘To bring men to the first knowledge of a revelation,’ says a living writer, ‘they must be addressed on the footing and principles of their nature, but as disciples and converts, to live by the religion, it is in course, and *altogether in reason*, that they accept the revelation itself as an authority for all it contains. They must learn first, by their present power of judgment, to see the religion to be of God, but under the conviction so admitted, the prerogative of faith will follow *.’

* Davison's Warburtonian Lectures, I. p. 28. I beg also again to refer to the treatise of Mr. Powell on Rational Religion.

I. GENERAL REMARKS.

BEFORE noticing any particular reply to my statements respecting Protestantism in Germany, I am desirous of making a few general remarks on them all.

The object of my work was to shew that certain opinions, entirely at variance with what is commonly considered as Christianity in England, have been widely held and taught in Germany, and that the influence they attained is mainly attributable to certain deficiencies in the Constitution of the German Churches. The statements which I made, undoubtedly represented a very singular state of things ; and the inferences to which they led are assuredly of very considerable importance. As several German writers have undertaken to destroy the credit of my work, I am anxious to afford the English reader an opportunity of judging between my antagonists and myself ; and of ascertaining, (1.) Whether I have *endeavoured* to represent things fairly ; and (2.) whether I have

succeeded in doing so, or in other words, whether my account may be relied on.

To the English Reader then I would beg to present the following brief view of the case.

My principal adversaries admit that I have *endeavoured* to write fairly, but they accuse me of having been misled by others, of ignorance and of exaggeration. To the first of these accusations I beg to put in here a distinct and positive denial, and to say, that I have received no assistance whatever. The correctness or incorrectness of my statements is wholly due to myself. With respect to the charges of ignorance and exaggeration, I must refer the reader to the following pages for my defence. But I must add here, what may perhaps be still more satisfactory to many persons, and what could not be adduced in reply to any specific charges, viz. the testimonies of other writers to the truth of the statements I have made. It will then be easy for others to judge, whether in accusing a vast portion of the German Protestant divines of holding opinions which degrade Christianity from a divine to a human institution, I went beyond the truth.

First, I will adduce the words of Reinhard, one

of those admirable and venerable men who in an apostate age adhered firmly, though always mildly, to the degraded and contemned doctrines of Christianity.

‘ I became,’ says he, ‘ a Preacher at a time when our innovating theologians had arrived at making the Christian system so simple and so easy to comprehend, that *it was nothing more than pure Deism*. At this epoch, *whoever aspired to reputation, or to the eulogies of the journals, must, as an almost indispensable condition, have attacked the authenticity of some book of Scripture, or the truth of some point of doctrine*. He who dared to present himself in public without paying his tribute *to the spirit of the age*, had no other reception to expect than contempt and ridicule—you know that I experienced how incomprehensible my attachment to old ideas was judged to be, and with what injustice, harshness, and bitterness, the journalists spoke of it. One indeed thought it right to collect the bitterest of these reproaches and to form them into a little volume *.’ Reinhard then goes on to state, that he never said a word in his own defence, but that *his friends* endeavoured to

* Neueste Protestantische bekenntnisse uber Sectengeist und Kanzel-krieg, veranlasst durch die Reinhardische Reformationspredigt von 1800, gesammelt von Wilhelm Köster.

excuse him, by saying 'that it was not from ignorance that he adhered to a *superannuated faith*—that circumstances probably compelled him (for there could be no doubt that he *was perfectly convinced of the truth of the new opinions—what man of sense could think otherwise?*) or that perhaps he thought that a teacher of religion was bound to teach what was presented to him.' After noticing how painful such a defence was to one who loved truth above all things, he explains how he arrived at a belief in orthodox Christianity. He observes, that the only consistent opinions are pure Deism, and a full belief in Christianity as a divine Revelation; that a mixture which allows a sort of joint and equal reign of Reason and the Word of God can only lead to confusion, and to a want of clear views and fixed principles. He then adds, 'This middle road appeared to me to be that taken by most of the theologians who were at work to purify Christianity. I say *by most*; for an attentive observer saw clearly that there were men among them who perfectly knew to what their opinions tended, in a word, *true Deists*, who found it more prudent not to announce their real character, who in the bottom of their hearts rejected all positive religion without publicly attacking it. But in fact the greatest number of innovating theologians did not know what they wished, and did not understand

to what their efforts led. They thought they had done a great service to truth in rejecting first one and then another doctrine of the old system, while they retained others, which on the same grounds they ought to have rejected. Thus was introduced into dogmatic theology a vacillation which deprived it of *all character of a system*. The greater part of these people did not know where they were; detached from the old system where Scripture decided every thing, but not having yet gained resolution to withdraw themselves wholly from its authority and to recognize only that of reason, these theologians established a sort of absurd compromise between the two. Sometimes they sought to satisfy reason at the expense of Scripture, sometimes they made it stoop to tolerate certain things too clearly taught to be denied. This was a negociation in which the parties alternately triumphed, as the negociator might chance to aspire to the reputation of Critic or Philosopher, and as his particular situation gave him more or less liberty. Can one be angry with Lessing for taking every occasion to laugh at this miserable system of the New Teachers, for expressing aloud his disgust at it, and his preference for the ancient orthodoxy *.

* The above passage is a translation of the French translation

It is true that it may be replied, that Reinhard is of a different opinion from the Rationalists. But on the one hand Reinhard was proverbial for his freedom from all violence; on the other, neither he nor a far more violent person could have any desire to exaggerate *the extent* of opinions which they disapprove.

Stäudlin in his latest work, 'the History of Rationalism and Supernaturalism,' in speaking of the eighteenth century, says, that 'Rationalism made greater strides during this period than it had ever done before, especially in Germany, and in the Protestant Church,' and that it is 'extraordinary and difficult to explain how Rationalism

of a work of Reinhard's called, in German, *Geständnisse seine predigten und seine bildung zum prediger betreffend*; in French, *Lettres de F. V. Reinhard sur ses études et sa carrière de Prédicateur*, Paris, 1816. It is translated by M. Monod, the well-known Protestant Minister at Paris, and there is an appendix of some interest by Mr. Stapfer.—Let me take this occasion of recommending a most admirable work of Reinhard called, *Versuch über den Plan, den der stifter uns. Religion zum besten der Menschheit entworfen*. 8vo. Wittenberg, 1798. It is translated by M. Dumas under the title, *Essai sur le Plan formé par le Fondateur de la Religion Chrétienne pour le bonheur du genre humain*. Dresden, 1799. It is an admirable refutation of the fancy that Christianity is only a sort of re-edition of more ancient wisdom and morals.

should have gained so great a preponderance, and so wide an extension among Christians *.

I. A. H. Tittman, in the preface to his *Pragmatische Geschichte*, p. 8, 9, in which he gives an account of the Rationalist opinions (agreeing *in its facts* with mine, and attempting to account for 'the existing state of theology and religion') states, perhaps truly, that it is not quite fair to charge the persons of the present day with the whole of the evil, part of which arises from preceding opinions and circumstances over which they had no controul. 'Unless I err,' says he, 'their preceding circumstances are forgotten, in judging of the present state of theological matters; and the blame of all that disorder and confusion *which are undeniable*, is laid on our contemporaries.' Are such phrases as 'the existing state of religion and theology,' and 'the disorder and confusion which are undeniable,' intended to describe the movements of a small and inconsiderable party? Hear the same writer again, Ch. 24. p. 306. He is speaking of the discarding of the symbolical books. 'Through this giving up, one might rather say, through this disregard of considerations before esteemed so weighty, things went so far, that by

* P. 282.

degrees, the notion of a fixed and enduring view of doctrine gave way to the most entire freedom of enquiry; and the greatest part of the divines of this period held themselves as justified in following simply, without any regard to external circumstances, the views presented by the exposition of Scripture through history, philosophy, and knowledge of languages.' And again, Ch. 26. p. 326. he speaks of 'the most suspicious appearances of this period (the last half of the eighteenth century) viz. the tendency by degrees to get rid of the view of Christianity which represents it a peculiar revelation, and to explain as non-essentials, and unnecessary for the present day, certain doctrines peculiar to it.'

But let us turn to other quarters: What says Göthe? He says plainly, that when he left Leipsic in 1768, 'the Christian Religion in Germany was fluctuating between its own constitution founded on historical traditions as well as positive laws, and *pure Deism*.' (Translation of Göthe's Life, vol. i. p. 247.) But what say others, Planke for example, and Lehmann, and Boll, and Beckendorf, and the historian Müller? It is impossible in the limits of a pamphlet to adduce the opinions of all these persons, but at a more convenient opportunity I will show, what I can now only assert, that

these persons speak of the state of the Protestant Religion in even stronger terms than I have done, and that some of them declare unreservedly that there are indeed Churches, but no longer any Church in Germany.

But again, I am accused of speaking with too much violence on the state of Rationalist theology. I am well aware that no cause however righteous, no ground of complaint however just, can afford a pretext for violence; and if any intemperance of language (I am not aware of it) has mixed itself in the expression of my feelings on this important subject, I beg here to declare my sincere and unfeigned regret for it. But on this point too I deem it important to show that my estimate of the perniciousness of the doctrines, and the mischief they have effected, is not exaggerated. I might here adduce numberless witnesses; but I shall content myself with one, that of Tittmann of Dresden, because his character must be known to many of my readers who are not acquainted with German, by his excellent Latin commentary on St. John's Gospel.

In the Preface to that work, after a most able exposure of the system of historical interpretation, he goes on to characterise it as follows:

‘What is the interpretation of the Scriptures if it relies not on words, but things, not on the assistance of languages, but on the decrees of reason, that is, of modern philosophy? What is all religion, what the knowledge of divine things, what are faith and hope placed in Christ, what is all Christianity, if human reason and philosophy is the only fountain of divine wisdom and the supreme judge in the matter of religion? What is the doctrine of Christ and the Apostles more than some philosophical system? But what then, I pray you, is, to deny, to blaspheme Jesus the Lord, to render his divine mission doubtful, nay vain and useless, to impugn his doctrine, to disfigure it shamefully, to attack it, to expose it to ridicule, and if possible, to suppress it, to remove all Christianity out of religion, and to bound religion within the narrow limits of reason alone, to deride miracles, and hold them up to derision, to accuse them as vain, to bring them into dispute, to torture sacred Scripture into seeming agreement with the fancies of human wisdom, to alloy it with human conjectures, to bring it into contempt, and to break down its divine authority, to undermine, to shake, to overthrow utterly the foundations of Christian faith? What else can be the event than this, as all history, a most weighty witness in this matter informs us, namely, that

when sacred Scripture, its grammatical interpretation and a sound knowledge of languages are, as it were, despised and banished, all religion should be contemned, shaken, corrupted, troubled, undermined, utterly overturned, and should be entirely removed and reduced to natural religion; or that it should end in a mystical theology, than which nothing was ever more pernicious to the Christian doctrine, and be converted into an empty *Μυθολογία*, or even into a poetical system, hiding every thing in figures and fictions, to which latter system not a few of the sacred orators and theologians of our time seem chiefly inclined, &c. &c.'

But there is still one other consideration which I am desirous to submit to the English Reader. Putting aside all notice of particular accusations of inaccuracy which are answered in the following pages in detail, let me enquire, what is the answer which has been given to the accusations I have produced, viz. that for some years the German Protestant Churches have not been bound by any rule of faith; and that, in consequence, a very large and influential body of Clergy have openly professed and taught doctrines which more or less tend to deprive Christianity of its character as an immediate Revelation? I say, with truth,

that I find no other answer than this—that Theology, like other sciences, must make progress—that enquiry cannot be stopped—that it is better to have learned and enquiring men as divines, even though their opinions differ from those laid down in the symbolical books, than mere men of form—that Scripture, interpreted as every one can, is a sufficient rule of faith—and that the Church of England with all its thirty-nine Articles is in a very bad state. This is the sum of the reply of one of my two principal opponents. The other repeats these arguments and adds to them this only—that I am wrong in describing the Rationalists as one party, for that in fact there are four classes of them; the three first of which, according to the writer's own admission, go to the full lengths which I have stated; and the fourth, which he declares to be the largest, and which he considers as the very perfection of Christianity, ' regards the Bible and Christianity as a Divine Revelation in a higher sense than the Rationalists, inasmuch as they admit a revealing energy of God, distinguishable from his general Providence; carefully discriminate the periods of this divine communication; ground the divinity of Christianity more on its internal evidence than on its miracles; but chiefly draw a distinction between Scripture-doctrines and Church-creeds;

reform the latter by the decisions of the divine word ; but as regards the relation between reason and Revelation, maintain that it is the province of reason to scrutinize Revelation, which must not contain any thing *contrary to reason*, though it contain much that *is above it*.' Now if I were disposed to cavil, I might certainly ask whether *Rationalism* could be more distinctly represented than in this creed, which professes to reject it ? Who is a true Rationalist, but he who thinks that it is the business of reason to scrutinize *what is confessed to be Revelation*, or who acknowledges it to be a Revelation, *only* by its accordance with what his reason judges to be true ? But this is a matter of little importance ; I am desirous rather to point out the singularity of this creed as the creed of Christians. If they who hold it have *not* rejected the positive doctrines of Christianity, why not say so simply and distinctly, and thus at once put me to silence and to shame ? It is in vain to hope that men can be deceived by a pretended dislike to Church systems and scholastic definitions and distinctions. We desire to know this and this only. Do the professors of this creed believe in the Divinity of the Saviour, in the justification of man through the Saviour's sacrifice, and in his sanctification by the Spirit ? If they *do* believe in these doctrines, I repeat it, the bare

statement of that belief will put me to confusion; if they do not believe them, why not equally avow their creed, and why complain of me for saying that they do not believe doctrines which they consider as neither Christian nor Scriptural? For this is the head and front of my offending.

If any thing more were necessary to shew what the opinions, so studiously held back, are, or rather what they are not, that farther information would be afforded by the simple fact, that there has been and still is a party of admirable and learned men in Germany, (thank God, it is an increasing one) which has always held the opinions usually called orthodox, and that these persons are *never named nor alluded to* in this studied enumeration. Their existence is as studiously passed over by my antagonist, as the nature of those opinions, which he considers as pre-eminently Christian. These things speak for themselves; they speak indeed far more strongly than could any statement of mine. I can only wonder that they who are guilty of such disingenuousness should be blind to the unfavourable impressions towards their cause which it must produce.

II. TRANSLATION OF THE SERMONS INTO GERMAN.

THIS translation appeared at the Leipsic Spring-fair in 1826. It is anonymous, but the Theologisches Literatur-blatt, an appendix to the Allgemeine Kirchen-Zeitung (for Friday, Dec. 15, 1826.) states that it is done by 'Herr Prediger Rosenmüller.' Whether this gentleman is the author of the Commentary on the Old Testament, or any relation of his, I have no means of determining. He did not rely on his own strength for my extermination, but called in *four* friends to his aid, who sign their remarks with the most laudable precision, as First Annotator, Second Annotator, &c. The preface is filled with abuse of the Church of England, and collaudations of the warmer devotion of the Wesleyan Methodists. The notes in general contain arguments (neither new nor well put) in favour of Rationalism. I have no intention of noticing these, but willingly leave to each Annotator the meed of praise due

to him for his ingenuity. 'Et vitula tu dignus, et hic.' I only regret to observe, that these gentlemen do not seem to have obtained in Germany the praise of discretion for their zeal in translating my work and confuting me. On the contrary, Dr. Bretschneider says very plainly, that they would have shewn much more wisdom in leaving the work untranslated and hushing the whole matter up. 'The statements I have made,' he says, 'may now very possibly fall into the hands of German statesmen and ministers, and prejudice the interests of the Rationalist party! while, if Mr. Preacher Rosenmüller, and his friends had been quiet, these statesmen might have known nothing of the matter!' I condole with Mr. Rosenmüller and his four Annotators very heartily on this waste of their time and labour.

My concern with them is a very brief one. They have only impeached my accuracy in two cases, and when I have shown how their impeachment in those two cases is conducted, I need not add, that if they had produced an hundred more accusations, I should hold myself perfectly absolved from the task of answering them.

Their first charge is as follows: I have said (p. 159, 160,) that 'with regard to the prophe-

cies, it will be seen from Rosenmüller's Proem to the third volume of his Commentary on Isaiah, that he considers that book as made up by one writer out of the minor works of several.' The third Annotator has here added the following note:—'Rosenmüller says exactly the contrary. (Isaiah, Part iii. p. 6, 2d Edit. *) *Contineri hoc libro non diversa plurium auctorum scripta minora in unum syntagma conjuncta, sed ab uno eodemque Scriptore integrum librum proficisci, illud arguit,*' &c. No contradiction certainly can apparently be more direct; yet it is produced by a mere dishonest trick. First of all, I will shew that I have stated Rosenmüller's opinion quite justly, and this will be clear from the following quotations from the Commentary on Isaiah, Part III. Vol. I. p. 4. 'Quum autem omnia quæ in hoc volumine continentur vaticinia, in unum corpus colligerentur, *cui Jesaia, celebris olim vatis, nomen præfigere visum esset*, illi qui eo negotio fungebantur, oraculum hocce (the first in order) grave illud et generalioris argumenti in

* That Rosenmüller has, in a later edition of his Commentary, renounced many of his offensive opinions, is a fact which I have mentioned elsewhere. I have not seen this later edition of the Commentary on Isaiah. Nor can any change in his opinions affect the matter in question.—The passage referred to, stands in the second edition.

fronte libri possuerunt *,' &c. Again (p. 9.) 'Jesaiana tamen oracula a manibus serioribus varie esse interpolata, *imo integris Carminibus alienis*, hic illic insertis adaucta, accuratior singularium hujus libri partium disquisitio docebit.' It will not be worth while to refer to more than a few instances of what we learn from this accurate examination. The first four verses of chap. ii. are probably older than Isaiah's time, according to Rosenmüller. On chap. xxi. he says, that the pretended prophecy of the fall of Babylon contained in it, was written at the time of that fall, and not in the age of Isaiah; and in the preface to chap. xxiii. he says exactly the same as to the prophecy of the fall of Tyre, adding, that many words used there, shew that this part is later than the time of Isaiah. It now remains to account

* This opinion is even more explicitly stated in p. 459 of the same volume, where Rosenmüller states his belief that chap. xiii. is the work of an age later than that of Isaiah, adding, 'At Jesaia nomen Carmen nostrum in fronte gerit? Quasi vero non constaret, esse tam *in hoc nostro, cui a Jesaia est nomen, vaticiniorum corpore*, quam in aliis vaticiniorum collectionibus, plura capita, quibus ab illis, qui hos libros conscripserunt *et in unum collegerunt*, falsum scriptoris nomen esset præpositum.' Had I referred to these places, my dishonest adversary could not have taken advantage of me. But, in fact, he must have known better than I, that this notion of Rosenmüller, as to Isaiah, caused a controversy in Germany.

for the discrepancy of these statements with that quoted by our Annotator. In the Proem to Isaiah, Part III. Vol. III. Rosenmüller delivers it as his opinion that there are *two grand divisions* of the book of Isaiah, the one containing chapters i.—xxxix. and suiting (with a few exceptions) the time of Isaiah; the other obviously later, as late, indeed, as the close of the Babylonish captivity. *Of this last* he repeatedly speaks *as a separate book*, and it is of *this* that he says (in contrast, I presume, to the other, of which, as I have shewn, he speaks as a whole made up of various parts) in the words quoted by the Annotator, ‘that it is the work of a single writer.’ What can be said of a person capable of such an artifice? I shall not waste a word upon him.

The second charge against me is founded on another statement in the same page. I have said there that Rosenmüller takes the history of Jonah to be a repetition of the Mythus of Hercules swallowed by the sea monster, and that it was written by a contemporary of Jeremiah. This, says the Annotator, is ‘a false and odious exposition of Rosenmüller’s opinion, as any one may convince himself who will refer to the Scholia on the minor prophets, Vol. II. p. 356.’ Let Rosenmüller speak for himself then. After mentioning

the *Mythus* I allude to, he adds, 'Hunc igitur *Mythum*, cum aliis vicinarum gentium superstitionibus ad Judæos quoque, uti credibile est, perlatum, hujus libri scriptor, rationibus Hebraicis accommodatum, exornatum et ampliatur, prouti in rem suam conducere videtur, intexit narrationi ad redarguendos atque corrigendos Hebræos a se compositæ,' &c. In p. 337, he pronounces the whole incidents in *Jonah* obviously false and absurd; and in p. 359, gives the opinion I have mentioned as to the age of the book.

If the first charge shows the readiness with which my adversary has recourse to artifice, the second will at least serve to prove that it is not because he has any dislike to the method of direct falsehood. After these specimens of his dispositions, I will fairly own that I could not summon up patience to examine his translation. But I take this occasion of telling my German readers that I will not be answerable for any thing in it, for I have casually detected at least one mistranslation which must be intentional*.

The only thing which the translator says besides worth notice, is the supposition that I could

* See the reply to Dr. Bretschneider.

not have derived all my information from my own reading or collection, but that I must have been assisted by some German divine. But as this charge is more formally brought forward by Dr. Bretschneider, I refer the reader to my reply to him, and hasten to bid a last farewell to my translator and his friends.

III. ALLGEMEINE KIRCHENZEITUNG.

- I. *Allgemeine Kirchenzeitung** for Thursday, Oct. 12, 1826, No. 161, pp. 1313—1320; and Saturday, Oct. 14, 1826. No. 162, pp. 1321—1327.
- II. *Theologisches Literatur-blatt zur Allgem. Kirchenzeitung*, for Friday, Dec. 15, 1826. No. 100. p. 1809, and following.

THE articles here adduced may be safely recommended as specimens of the Rationalist style described by Dr. Staüdlin. It has not often been my lot to meet with any thing so vulgar and so violent; yet, when I consider the writer's object, I ought to feel highly gratified. By far the larger portion

* This journal is published at Darmstadt and conducted by a Dr. Zimmerman. It is considered as one of the regular organs of the Rationalist party; and its influence is undoubtedly very great. I cannot but wonder that the good taste and feeling of Germany have not long ago revolted at it. Never has it been my ill-fortune to see a religious journal in this country, belonging to any class or sect, conducted with such vulgar virulence as this accredited journal of the Rationalists. The temper too displayed in it is dreadful. My reviewer complains of me for wishing for a controul over opinions. Had he not better correct the desire for bodily pains and penalties exhibited in his journal? See the intolerant spirit of persecution displayed (on the strange business in Hanover) in this journal for October 24, 1826. No. 168, pp. 1370, 1371.

of the two first articles is consumed in a most virulent attack on the Church of England, *avowedly* with the intention of consoling those Germans who may have been affected by the statements I have made as to their Protestant Churches, and of proving to them that the Church of England is in the most deplorable state *, notwithstanding the benefit which it enjoys, as I have argued, from the controul exercised over opinion by its Articles and Liturgy. Now in producing these allegations as a set off against my representation of the state of Protestantism in Germany, the writer certainly admits that representation to be generally true.

If I wished effectually to prejudice my readers against him, I should quote his long tirade against our Church; but when I find a person so entirely the dupe of accounts founded either on utter ignorance, or wilful falsehood; when I find him, for

* This is the reply made to me, not only by this writer, but by the translator of my Sermons, both in the Preface, and in a furious note, (p. 14.) in which he accuses the English Church of bigotry, pride, hypocrisy, &c. &c. by Drs. Ammon, Bretschneider, &c. &c. It is singular too that Dr. Ammon, in replying to Dr. Hohenegger, a Catholic Priest, who has produced exactly the same charges as I have against the Rationalists, has no better argument than 'Tu quoque.' See Unveränderliche Eibheit, &c. Pt. I. p. 27—29.

example, asserting that the dignitaries of our cathedrals are frequently captains in the navy, grooms of the king's bed-chamber, or actors; that many of our bishops are suspected of infidelity; that the salaries of curates are 10*l.* or 12*l.* per annum, and that the Episcopal population is daily sinking into the most frightful depravity *, I consider him as worthy rather of pity than of anger †. At all events, a writer who can be guilty

* The journalist says, he states this on the authority of Dr. Steinkopff. I therefore took the liberty of writing to Dr. Steinkopff, to mention the use made of his name. His answer states, that he is 'surprised and grieved to learn, that without any knowledge or sanction of his, his name should have been introduced in a controversy to which he was previously a stranger, and in which he desires to take no part on either side, for he cannot approve of any general and indiscriminate, much less of severe and rash assertions,—whether they may be directed against the national Church of England or against the Protestant Churches of Germany (a courteous hint to me)—that he has had the happiness of knowing many truly excellent clergymen, and members of the national Church, and that they know him too well to suspect him of casting unjust reflections on a Church for which he has both felt and manifested the sincerest regard and attachment.' I trust that Dr. Steinkopff will allow that the statements ascribed to him are indeed *unjust* reflections on the Church of England. However this may be, it is pretty clear that the writer of the German article derives all his information from German travellers and residents in England unfavourably disposed to the national Church, and from English dissenters.

† I could heartily wish that on another point the writer spoke

of such errors is not worth the trouble of refutation. And he who in a serious essay can bring forward, what he calls the 'fat epicurean appearance of the English clergy' as an argument, puts himself out of the pale of gentlemanly controversy. In good truth, if his facts were all correct, I cannot see what inference he would draw from them. If it is alleged, that something little removed from Deism has been taught in the German Protestant Churches, and that the absence of all church authority has enabled the clergy to indulge in these opinions; what answer is it to say that, in another church, which in some degree exercises this authority, the clergy are ignorant, and the people vicious? Is it meant to argue that orthodox clergy

with as little reason as of the infidelity of our bishops, and our chapters of actors, and navy captains; but however violent and vulgar his reproaches are, there is truth in what he says as to the want of a proper education for the clergy. He states with great truth the completeness of the courses of divinity in the German universities; and the abuse of knowledge among a large party of the German divines can never be alleged as an argument against deeper theological study among ourselves. I do not mean that to individuals, private study may not answer as well, or better than public lectures; but in the Church we are not to think of individuals, but to form, for the sake of the Church and the people, a body of learned men—a task certainly very difficult without public instruction of the highest order.

cannot be learned or conscientious, and that orthodox laymen cannot be moral? or that a good church is wholly out of the question, and that we must submit either to licentiousness in opinion, or to carelessness in practice? If these are not the inferences from the writer's argument, I am at a loss to conjecture what they can be. And if they are, they are assuredly not worth refutation. I leave him therefore very willingly in possession of all his strange blunders and his virulence against the Church of England, and turn to what he has said especially with regard to me.

I need hardly premise that every decent and gentleman-like epithet is attached in singular profusion to my name. The greater part of the writer's allegations against me are the same as those of Dr. Bretschneider. Indeed the line of argument, of blunder, of fallacy, nay of quotations * against me is so entirely the same, that it is difficult to believe there is not some connexion between them. There is, in both, the same wilful misunderstanding of all that I have said as to the controul to be exercised over religious opinions in every Church. Both refer to the words of my citation from Calixtus as if they were

* As from Reinhard Moral. Part II. p. 774.

my own, both charge me with an inquisitorial spirit—with holding principles subversive of those of the Reformation—with thinking nothing worth attention except the Thirty-nine Articles—with believing that the learning of the Germans is an evil—with having gained all my information from German friends, &c. &c. To these accusations no other reply is necessary than that which will be found under the same heads in the answer to Dr. Bretschneider. The following observations comprise all that is peculiar to this writer.

He charges me with having omitted all notice of the 'sacred names of Morus, Knapp, Keil, Jerusalem, Niemeyer, Rohr, Schuderoff, &c.' That in the list of orthodox writers the name of Knapp should have been noticed is true, and I can only express my regret at the omission and the surprise I felt when I discovered it. It was an omission wholly of mistake, and arose from no want of sincere respect for the name and character of Knapp. Keil and Niemeyer *are* noticed—Rohr's 'sacred name' was omitted, but his principal work, (the Letters on Rationalism, published anonymously) is noticed constantly, so that this accusation is a mere trick. The Journalist may be assured, that in the second edition, Rohr's 'sacred name' shall receive the honour due to it.

Of the others I did not speak, because I had no occasion to notice them. I did not undertake to give a history of every German Divine, but to show the opinions publicly taught in the German churches, and to illustrate my statements by references to various writers.

What follows is an abridgment of all the material parts of the remainder of the articles in question, omitting the scurrility. In commenting on my statement, that the confessions of faith of the Lutheran Church are so long as not to be well adapted for the purpose of subscription, the Journalist asks, whether it is the fault of the modern German Divines that the early Reformers composed inappropriate confessions? and this question is repeated in half-a-dozen forms. The next thing which is at all addressed to me is an invitation to Germany, where I am desired 'not to live with saints, but with Rationalists, and to attend the examinations of some candidates for orders. Then I shall see what a quantity of learning is required of a young man going into the Church. I shall find that he is examined by the *Bible*, and required to adhere to that as his rule of faith. To be sure he may perhaps have a few notions not to be found in Hollaz or Beyer, and may make old gentlemen shake their heads at

some of his fancies, but an enlightened college (of examiners) is not anxious on that account. They had rather have thinking young men, capable and desirous of learning, than stiff memory-men, who know forms and definitions, and can jabber their prayers, (this, gentle reader, is intended as a severe blow for the poor English,) and do their business like puppets, but know nothing of real wisdom. Our professors wish for no followers to learn articles of faith by heart, but build up men who enquire, &c. We (Germans) do not stick by what we know, but new necessities present themselves to us. These enquiries have led us to what Mr. Rose calls Atheism *, &c.; but let him not think our state so pitiable. We still make Scripture the ground of our belief. But then its languages must be studied, and all this gives occasion to difference of opinion amongst us, as it did among the old Reformers. Many parts of Scripture, to be sure, have been attacked, but then they have been defended, and not one has yet been *struck out*. We do not deny that we may err, but in a free church the errors of even great men do no mischief. Much amongst us has already become better—our jubilee, in 1817, shewed the warm interest of our

* It is a mere falsehood to say that I brought any such accusation against the Rationalists.

contemporaries in Christianity!—our churches are full when there is a distinguished preacher!! (delightful and improving state,) and very many books of edification and piety are sold. Even Ammon allows that things are improving. Besides, men have too often contended about the words of man, and not of God. Christianity is simple in faith. There is one God and father of all—Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is, *in a peculiar sense*, the Saviour of all, the Spirit of God is our assistance to our sanctification. But what have men made of these doctrines? Does the word Trinity occur in the Bible (delightful argument), or Θεανθρωπος, or satisfaction, &c.? Is it unchristian not to bind one's self to these, or will God condemn men for not agreeing with Athanasius, Calvin, or the Lutheran Churches? Men from all parts of Germany, with very different views, theological and philosophical, agree in *what is necessary and wholesome for all. All keep to the words of the Bible, though they often explain them differently.* It is one Lord whom they own, one Spirit who animates them, though the letter of the Bible is differently worked on; one goes more to sacred history, another to doctrines, but all seek health in Jesus, all are united in heart and love for Christianity.'

A very few words will comprise all the remarks

I have to make on these arguments, and all the reply which I wish to give to the charges of bigotry with which they are plentifully interspersed.

First, then, I do *not* blame modern German Divines for the bad judgment which dictated their confessions of faith—but I blame them because although they *profess* to belong to a Lutheran or a Calvinistic Church, they hold few or none of the points of belief recognized by those Churches, and because they are thus guilty of gross deceit. To accuse me of bigotry for objecting to this is absurd; if the reviewer had read the Sermons he attacks, he would have found me saying, that they who could not agree in the faith of a given Church, should not *enter it*, but *should become openly teachers of Christianity under such a shape as they do admit*. Freedom, I agree with the reviewer, is an excellent thing, but honesty is a still better. And I ask, what sort of honesty is it to enter into a church whose faith you despise, and are perhaps labouring to overthrow? On this subject, however, I have spoken so fully in the reply to Dr. Bretschneider that I deem it unnecessary to add another word. For the same reason I pass over all the absurdities of the journalist with respect to the principles of the Reformation, (principles as much opposed to the practice of

the Rationalists as light to darkness,) and go on to what he says on another point, the rule of faith in the German churches. They have still, he says, a guide of faith in the Scripture; an assertion which is directly followed by a statement, that Scripture is differently interpreted by different persons; and very soon by an observation, that the words Trinity, Atonement, God-man, &c. are not found in the Bible, and that God will never condemn men for disagreeing with Athanasius, or Augustine. I am well aware that the difference between my German adversaries and myself is here wholly irreconcilable. It rests on grounds not visible on the surface. The simple fact is, that they have no value for a Church in our sense of the word, and do not see that any benefit arises from unity. Nay, this very journalist argues (p. 1321.) that without reasoning in a circle, it cannot be proved that the composers of the symbolical books ever intended to bind men down to them, or to prevent them from exercising their free judgment. That point it is not my business to argue; but while we disagree on the foundation, it would of course be vain and hopeless to discuss the merits or faults of the superstructure. I address myself to those only who would admit the advantages of unity in a church, and to them I distinctly state my conviction, that

for the production of that unity, the assent to Scripture, *not interpreted*, on part of the ministry would be of no avail. But I may spare them and myself the trouble of arguing this point. It has been already admirably done by Balguy *, and I the more willingly refer to him, as the moderation of his opinions is so well known.

My only business with the journalist is to point out the futility of his defence. My accusation against the Rationalists is, that they reject almost all that is positive in Christianity, and consider it only as a moral system under the protection of Providence. The journalist in reply, says, that although the words Trinity, God-man, Atonement, &c. are not in Scripture, yet that the Rationalists acknowledge Christ the Son of God to be *in a peculiar sense* the Saviour of the world. I have already noticed in my Sermons the strange way in which the Rationalists retain the phrases of orthodox Christians and attach a different meaning to them. They seem, like the wit, to think that words were invented only to deceive. This practice is most dangerous to others, and most discreditable to themselves. Most dangerous, I say, to others, because a treacherous friend is always worse than

* Charge V. in vol. i. p. 433.

an open enemy. The Deist, (says Soame Jenyns, speaking of the English Rationalists) comes like the multitude with swords and staves to take Jesus; the Rationalist, like Judas, betrays him with a kiss. But it is also most discreditable to themselves. They do not hold the opinions commonly called orthodox; why should they use, in expressing their belief, terms which, from their long usage in conveying those opinions, bear a definite and peculiar signification, different from that which the Rationalists choose to attach to them? Is any good or honest purpose answered by this proceeding? Are they ashamed or afraid of expressing, either collectively or individually, their real opinions? or have they no definite opinions at all? For example, the journalist says that Christ is the Son of God, and in a peculiar sense the Saviour of mankind. Has he formed to himself any idea of the meaning of the phrase, *Son of God*, as expressed in Scripture? Does he mean by it one who has any part in the Divine nature, or a mere man, favoured and protected by God? Can he not plainly and honestly tell us what his opinion is? Again, he says, that Christ was the Saviour of the world. Does he believe that Christ by his death made satisfaction for our sins, or that his doctrine and example are calculated to save men from vice or misery? Is it not, I again

ask, easy to state the opinion he has conceived ? Is it not easy to be open, honest, and sincere ? The difficulty, I believe, with many, I say not with all the Rationalists, is to be open and sincere, and yet to retain any appearance of positive Christianity. And what I complain of in the journalist and my other opponents is simply this. I have stated briefly, shortly, and nakedly, the opinions which the Rationalists hold, and which they express in their books. When thus stated, they certainly are not very like Christianity, but that is not my fault. If they wished to act fairly, they should correct me, if I have explained their opinions erroneously ; but they should openly and frankly avow their belief where it is rightly stated. This is all I could require. I had no intention of entering into controversy with them. I did not dispute their opinions. I only *stated* them. It is therefore absurd and unreasonable in a reply to me, partly to defend their proceedings, and partly to hold back their real belief. If Wegscheider, or Bretschneider, or this journalist will simply and plainly state his opinions, these opinions, though doubtless differing from one another, would amply confirm my statements. But were my adversaries worth complaining of, I might certainly complain of their want of frankness, and of their endeavouring to destroy the credit of my statements by their

strange mystification, and by their using words in one sense to which they know that another will be attached. The unwary reader may well be induced to believe that I have traduced the Rationalists, when I state that they believe Jesus to be a mere man, while their champion thus declares that they believe him to be the Son of God and Saviour of the world. They only who know the Rationalists and their works, know that the two statements are *precisely* the *same*. It may be well, while speaking on this subject, to notice the admission made by the journalist on these points. If I attended, he says, an examination for orders, I should find perhaps that the candidates did not agree with Hollaz and Beyer, (the old and orthodox expositors of the principles of their Church,) and that an old gentleman might shake his head at them in fear lest religion might suffer. This is in fact an admission of my statements. The young Lutheran and Calvinistic ministers are *not* required to hold to the principles of their Churches. It may satisfy the journalist and his friends to say, that the composers of the symbolical books never intended to bind men down to a belief in their exposition of the doctrines of Scripture. I am not concerned in that question. I only state two facts, the one, that the German Protestant clergy are allowed to teach what each considers

as a true view of Scripture; the other, that in the Churches where this licence is granted, greater or less tendencies to a rejection of all that is positive in Christianity may be very generally discerned.

In conclusion I would beg to observe, that in addition to his scurrility, the journalist does not hesitate to make use of most unfair artifices. The citations which I make from others, he ascribes, whenever he finds it convenient, to me, as the expression of my own opinions. For example, I have quoted a defence offered by some writers for not adhering to the confession of Augsburg, viz. that it was intended only to convey objections against certain errors *. This he chooses to cite as my opinion, and then charges me with inconsistency, for still thinking that subscription to that confession should be required.

Again †, I have quoted Calixtus. His words are charged on me both by Dr. Bretschneider and the journalist as my own, and commented on accordingly.

Such a style of controversy can excite but one

* See p. 116.

† In p. 35, of the Sermons.

feeling. In taking leave of this journalist, indeed, I can assure him with great truth, that I have felt only contempt for his scurrility, and regret that any one who enters on controversy on such a subject, should so entirely degrade himself as to shew an utter want of that frankness which becomes every honest man, and of the courtesy which distinguishes a gentleman.

IV. DR. BRETSCHNEIDER.

CONTROVERSY, although perhaps always in a greater or less degree pernicious, morally speaking, to those who are engaged in it, possesses nevertheless a high degree of interest where *opinions* of importance are at stake; but where its only object is the defence of statements of matters of fact, it appears to me to be of all wearisome things, the most wearisome. To defend them, too, not against open contradiction, not against fair denial, but against special pleading, against verbal criticism, against mistake, perversion, and mistranslation, is a waste of time to which I would never submit for mere personal considerations. Any one who is conscious, however humble his talents or his knowledge may be, that he has been anxious to find out the truth, and careful to state it, may well leave his labours to their fate. In the end justice will be done to his honesty, and the errors, *quas aut incuria fudit, aut humana parum cavit natura*, will be attributed to their right source, by the only judges about whose verdict he can be solicitous.

The disinclination to undertake any defence of what I have said arising from these feelings, would certainly not be altered by the contents of Dr. Bretschneider's pamphlet *, to which, in the prosecution of my wearisome task, I am now come. I should not, perhaps, speak correctly if I said that it was unworthy even of the bad cause it undertakes to support, but I should be guilty of great injustice to the author, if I did not say that it is quite unworthy of him. I do not feel myself at liberty, however, to pass it over in silence, because, in the present case, the question is *not* a personal one. I have stated that, in the German Protestant Churches, there is nothing to restrain the ministers from pursuing, or from teaching, their own fancies as Christian doctrine; and that a very wide departure from what is ordinarily reckoned Christianity, has taken place in them. Others as well as myself have traced that departure to the absence of all controul over

* This pamphlet has been recently translated by the Rev. W. A. Evanson, to whom I beg to offer my best acknowledgments for the handsome manner in which he has spoken of me. I trust that his translation will be generally read by those who have any interest in the question. The weakness and palpable sophistry displayed in it on the one hand, and the irritation and want of common decency on the other, are the strongest arguments I could desire in favour of my statements.

opinion, and have hence inferred the necessity of such controul to the well-being of a Church. If it be true, as Dr. B. would persuade us, that no such departure has taken place, this inference is without foundation. I am therefore anxious to shew, that I have neither misled others, nor have been misled myself on this important subject; and I believe I shall find no difficulty in showing that Dr. B. has not sustained even one of the charges he has brought against me. When I heard of his work, I really flattered myself that I might gain some information from it; and that such casual errors on my part, as a foreigner, undertaking to treat of so wide a subject in so small a space, can hardly escape, would be corrected. I can say, with great truth, that for such correction I should have been most thankful. But I have been miserably disappointed. Instead of the honest and frank reply of a scholar and a gentleman, which I might fairly expect from Dr. Bretschneider, I am constrained to say, that the pamphlet is, from beginning to end, little more than a series of quibbles and evasions. Instead of meeting the question fairly, it catches at careless expressions, dwells on minor points, and quarrels about words.

The method, indeed, which Dr. B. adopts to

procure a verdict against me, can never, I should imagine, answer his purpose. He commences with declaring *, that a reply to my statements would involve a consideration of the history of the German Churches from the epoch of the Reformation—and that the purpose of such a reply will be answered if he can destroy my credit, by convicting me of partiality, ignorance, and incompetence. Now such a plan of attack might be very effectual against an adversary who rested his statements on his own judgment and his own knowledge. But the only merit and utility of my work is this—that it appeals to nothing but *the writings of the Rationalists*, and that it does not profess to rely on any personal observations. What good then can Dr. B. do to his cause, by proving me prejudiced and ignorant? The littera scripta manet. I may be animated by the worst spirit, or I may be profoundly ignorant, but the proof of those propositions will not infuse Christianity into the pages of the Rationalist writers. I have appealed to volume and page; let Dr. B. show that the passages I refer to do not appear, or that they have not the meaning I ascribe to them. Four or five instances of such proceedings on my part would indeed establish such dishonesty or in-

* Translation, p. 191.

competence against me, as must close my lips for ever. Has Dr. B. been able to produce one?

But although I thus demur to my adversary's choice of ground, I do not refuse to meet him on it. Before I do so, however, I must show the reader the spirit in which he comes to the combat. In that part of the contest I willingly allow him all the superiority he desires. I shall be compelled, indeed, to speak more harshly than I wish, but I shall call him no names, and be guilty of no personalities. Previously to reading his pamphlet, I felt that respect for him which a reputation for learning always commands; and I sincerely regret that he has destroyed the sentiment, by showing that he does not possess those feelings of courtesy and decorum which are at least the *natural* fruit of literature and learning. The following specimens will sufficiently show the temper in which his work is written:

‘ A true Englishman thinks there can be no justice, if judges and advocates do not appear in the courts in stiff coats, gowns, and in the great wigs of former days, though no one now clothes himself in so tasteless a manner; and that the constitution will go to wreck if the Lord Chancellor does not sit on a woolsack. So Mr. Rose thinks

that religion must go to wreck if theology should throw away the stiff clothing of symbolical doctrine-formulas, and if the Liturgy should speak no longer in the language of the 16th century *.

Again,

‘ We should allow Mr. Rose to pay as many compliments to his colleagues and his superiors at our cost as he pleases; and should not grudge him the pleasure of telling his friends, what they are all persuaded of before, that there is no country more perfect than England, and no Church more excellent than the high Episcopal Church, with its Thirty-nine Articles and its tedious Liturgy †.’

All this speaks for itself, as do Dr. Bretschneider's courtesies to me,—my bigotry, folly, stupidity, &c. I am not surprised at his want of temper, because I know the situation of the Rationalists not to be a pleasant one. The hand of authority is now against them, at least in one great Protestant country in Germany:—their violence has produced a reaction—they are split among themselves—and they see that their ad-

* Translation, p. 79.

† Ibid. p. 18.

versaries are gaining strength, and getting into public favour. All these things make them angry. They do not like their worst features to be brought forward. Of some things they have learned to be actually ashamed—some they would at least disclaim—for some they would apologize—and endeavour, in all ways, to present themselves to their rulers and their countrymen in as fair a position as possible. Their fears and their jealousies are indeed indiscribably ridiculous. It would hardly be believed, that Dr. Bretschneider, thrice in this short Pamphlet, deprecates the evil which may result to his party, from my humble work falling into the hands of German statesmen, ministers, and rulers *! Under these circumstances I freely forgive Dr. B. his irritability and his want of courtesy, and proceed to notice his reasonings, such as they are.

* Translation, pp. 17. 19. 78. I cannot think that Dr. B. displays any particular wisdom in making these statements. If German statesmen are likely to listen so readily to my accusations, can they be so utterly destitute of foundation as Dr. B. would have his reader believe? If a foreigner were to publish a work, accusing the English Clergy of a leaning to Socinianism, or to Popery, would they have felt any anxiety as to the impression it was likely to make on the English Government? If my statements are, indeed, utterly false, Dr. B. pretty openly proclaims the folly or the ignorance of the statesmen to whom he alludes.

The matter in dispute is this: I have described a very large body of divines in the German Protestant Churches, as having given up all the great doctrines of Christianity; of not considering it as a Revelation in the proper sense of the word, but merely as an excellent moral system, which may be said to come from God, because all that is good comes from him; and of thinking that even that description is to be applied to such parts of Christianity only as recommend themselves to our reason. I have said that these opinions were very general, though not universal, but that they are now beginning to lose their credit. The only point then which can give Dr. Bretschneider as plaintiff, or myself as defendant, any just claim to the reader's attention, is this, are these statements correct, and if they are, are the opinions to which they relate defensible?

But instead of any denial, or any justification of the facts mentioned in the libel of which he complains, Dr. B. brings forward his first charge of prejudice and exaggeration against me*; and the words on which he founds it are some in which I have described Rationalism as 'a dreadful pest,'—'threatening the destruction of all that is dear, sacred, and holy.'

* Translation, p. 20.

I need hardly observe, that an advocate who had any reliance on the strength of his cause, would not, when he accused a whole volume of exaggeration, rest the proof of his charge on a single sentence. If the charge be just, he could not be at a loss for far more ample confirmation of it. However, if he likes to set his cause upon a cast, I have no objection to stand the hazard of the die.

That the words he has quoted were used wholly and entirely in reference to *Christianity*,—that the very page from which they are extracted proves this,—that in no one part of my work is there the smallest intention of accusing the Rationalists of either Atheism or immorality,—nay, that the very sum and substance of my accusation is, that in their doctrines there is a constant tendency to Deism, and in many cases a perfect identity with it, every candid reader will admit: every candid reader would, therefore, take these expressions in the sense in which they were clearly and evidently meant; and understand me as asserting, that the Rationalist doctrines threaten with destruction all that is dear, sacred, and holy in Christianity—that in the Rationalist system, in a word, all the hopes which the Christian reposes in Jesus the eternal God, as the Redeemer of man alike from the power and the

punishment of sin, are reduced to nothing. But of such candour—(it would be more fitly called *honesty*)—I can rarely accuse Dr. Bretschneider: he has here and elsewhere descended to an artifice unworthy of him. A charge which is preferred in one sense, and which in that sense is *just*, he tacitly assumes to be made in another in which it is *unjust*, which was not intended by me, but of which the words composing the accusation are by dint of torture susceptible. In this second sense he denies the charge with truth in the *letter*, but not in the *spirit*, because he evidently expects the unsuspicious reader to understand the denial as applying to that sense in which the charge was made. In the present case his logic has been obviously this:—In speaking of *Christianity*, I say that the Rationalists would destroy all that is sacred, dear, and holy:—that he cannot and does not deny; but he tacitly assumes that this proposition is *not confined* to Christianity, but *general*. Then he argues that a belief in God and a love for morality are things dear, sacred, and holy. But to these the Rationalist opinions threaten no evil,—therefore, my accusations must arise from mere prejudice and exaggeration. By this petty artifice, Dr. B. has given an apparent denial to my statement, while in fact he has taken no notice of it, and accuses me of dealing unjustly, by

the use of such strong expressions, with even Bahrddt, whom he seems to consider as the weakest and worst of the writers I have noticed. Secure in the position which I have never attacked, viz. that the Rationalist writers believe in a God, and wish well to morality, his chivalry in defence of even those from whose opinions he dissents, knows no bounds. Although Wegscheider goes far, as he says, beyond him in Rationalism, he is quite willing to defend even him from the charge of wishing to destroy all that is sacred, dear, and holy *, which charge, *in the sense ascribed to it by Dr. B.*, let me repeat, I never made. It would be sufficient to notice this, and pass over Dr. B.'s defence of Wegscheider, with which I have no concern ; but that defence will throw some light on the matter in question, that is to say, the opinions of the Rationalists. And I am anxious, not like Dr. B. to avoid the general question, but to meet it. I shall therefore say a few words with respect to Wegscheider, to whose name I have so often, in my Sermons, referred. I did so for the

* Dr. B. asserts that Dr. Ammon and himself now belong to the same party. Yet Dr. Ammon speaks, as my readers will see below, of ' Rationalism, which dries up the heart, and her companion, Unbelief.' Before Dr. B. attacked me, he should have desired his brother in arms, not to use declarations so nearly resembling mine.

reason stated in my Preface,—that his work contained a general view or summary of the opinions of his party, and references to their works. His private opinion was a matter of no consequence. The opinion of one man is no criterion of that of a Church, and therefore when I quoted him, I quoted him only because I found, from a comparison of his work with others, that he spoke briefly the sentiments of a large body of persons who agreed with him in opinion. A defence of Wegscheider in particular, was therefore quite a superfluous piece of gallantry on Dr. B.'s part; but as he chooses to make Wegscheider an especial party to the warfare, and wishes to prove, or rather to *appear* to prove me guilty of prejudice, in saying that the opinions held by that writer lead to the destruction of all that is sacred, dear, and holy, I have no objection to shew that the charge, in the sense I intended it, though made against a body, is perfectly applicable to Wegscheider in particular. Dr. B. tells us *, that that divine not only believes in a God, his creation, providence, the free agency of man, the immortality of the soul, and future retribution, and has amply proved these points in his work; but that with respect to the positive institutions of Christianity, he so ex-

* Translation, p. 21. 25.

presses himself as to recognize 'whatever articles of faith are necessary for a Christian life.' What sense Dr. B. may choose to attach to these words, which he prints in large letters, as if of great importance, I am not concerned to inquire; but I assert, and will prove, that Wegscheider rejects every thing peculiar to Christianity, which Christians deem, dear, sacred, and holy, with one single exception. Dr. B. produces three passages from Wegscheider to prove his assertion, which would prove any thing else just as well. But let us see what they do prove. Wegscheider, like many Deists, recognises the excellence of the Christian system of morality; and, on the grounds which I just now stated, (viz. that all that is good comes from God,) calls it *divine truth*. On the same grounds he dignifies the Bible, as he might all that is true in Plato or Epictetus, with the name of the Word of God*. The first passage then which Dr. B. quotes†, states, that 'there is no doubt that the canon of the New Testament con-

* It is painful and disagreeable to accuse a large body of men of artifice; but such an accusation against the Rationalists is susceptible of the fullest proof. They use the words which orthodox Christians use *in a different sense*, and thus frequently defend themselves by a disgraceful juggle. (See the Reply to the Allgem. Kirchen-Zeitung.) Is not this quite below men of learning and character?

† Translation, p. 22.

tains the most ancient and credible documents of the Christian religion, and the *divine truth* which it sanctions.' In the next *, which follows, as Dr. B. says, a denial that Jesus and the Evangelists had any immediate inspiration from God, and an admission of their claim to a mediate one, Wegscheider expresses his wish that 'all the artificial conjectures and difficult and useless questions as to Revelation and the inspiration of Scripture, which have been stirred in a *recent* age, being laid aside, the origin of Christianity and Scripture should be derived from God,' (in the way above explained,) 'and that its contents, which are truly divine, should be recommended to men as if proceeding from God, and being his true word, and thus transferred to the advantage of daily life.' Dr. B. says, that in these sentiments every Supernaturalist will join;—and I add, so will every reasonable Deist.

But still farther, in another passage †, Wegscheider states, that as the author of the Christian religion united great sanctity and piety to the purest precepts of virtue, and *thus accommodated himself most admirably to the divine will*, the help and favour of Providence assisted him *wonderfully*,

* Translation, p. 22.

† Ibid. p. 24.

and therefore the institution of Christianity is most justly accounted the work of God; and with equal justice Jesus and his Apostles are accounted messengers and ministers of God. A most happy advocate the Rationalists have, doubtless, in Dr. Bretschneider. The question is, Do they believe that Christianity is a Divine Revelation, and do they receive (among others) the doctrines of the Divinity of Christ, and the Atonement made for man's sin by his blood? Dr. Bretschneider does not even affect to say that they do. But, says he, one of the most violent of them allows that Christianity is an excellent moral dispensation,—that whatever is good comes from God—that Christianity may therefore be well said to come from him,—and that the New Testament contains a credible account of it; nay, that as Jesus was a most excellent person, God favoured his plan, and so he and his Apostles may be justly called messengers of God! Could Wegscheider say less, without openly professing to oppose Christianity? Nay, even if he did openly oppose it, could he deny the excellence of its morality? What his real opinions are, I will now show; and I will first state his opinion as to the immortality of the soul. It is taken, be it remembered, from a book called, ‘*Institutiones Theologiæ Christianæ Dogmaticæ.*’ After stating how the doctrine of a future life is presented in the Old and New Testaments, and

as an ecclesiastical doctrine, he delivers his judgment on it in words, of which the following are an abridgment :

‘ To decide on these opinions, we must now see, under the guidance of sound reason, on what arguments the doctrine of the immortality of the soul can be built.

‘ I. The first is the historical argument, from the consent of almost all nations and philosophers ; but this only shows that human reason may be easily led to adopt the opinion.

‘ II. We have philosophical arguments ;

‘ (1.) Theoretical, viz.

‘ *a.* Metaphysical ones, arising from the nature of the soul.

‘ *β.* Teleological ; deduced partly from the analogy of nature, in which we see nothing perish, but rather from death enter on a new life ; and partly from an accurate consideration of human nature struggling on perpetually to a greater degree of perfection.

‘ *γ.* Theological ; arising from true ideas of God, the just, wise, and benignant Creator of the universe and of man.

‘ (2.) Practical; having a reference to man’s moral constitution, and especially his consciousness of a moral law, which demands a more perfect unity of virtue and happiness in another life.

‘ If we examine these arguments, especially the theologic and moral ones, which have not only a probability like the others, but the highest evidence, we shall find that they agree with the purer* and more simple doctrines of Scripture on

* He explains the meaning of this word elsewhere by saying, that there are two opinions on the immortality of the soul propounded in the New Testament. The one of which simply, and avoiding all the figments about Hades, teaches that we are at once to pass to a future life: the other accommodated to Jewish notions, and speaking of a resurrection of the body, and of the good and evil, at the coming of Christ, which was taught to be near at hand (p. 555); and he afterwards (p. 571) tells us in so many words, that the resurrection of the body is a notion arising from the imperfect fancies of uncivilized men—that it is so joined with the *mythi* in the New Testament, relating to the Messiah and his return to life, that it can only be explained and defended as they can; and that though taught in the New Testament, it must be allowed, that either Jesus favoured the opinions of his countrymen, or rather that the Apostles put such a sentiment in his mouth as the Messiah, whose province they wrongly judged of from certain vulgar notions of the Jews and some allegorical and obscure sayings of his own! If I ever mistake Wegscheider’s meaning, I trust, that his barbarous Latin will be my excuse. I can truly say, that I *endeavour* to understand and represent it fairly.

the subject, and teach that this life and the next are so connected, that the one will instantly succeed the other; and that the soul, with feeling and consciousness and a new organ, (as it were a more subtle body, for finite minds, without limit of space and a bodily nature, can hardly be conceived,) will survive after the death of the earthly body.'

What then! The Christian's hope of a future life rests, as it did before Christ came into the world, on metaphysical and teleological and moral proofs! He did not bring immortality to light by the Gospel! It is not now *more certain* than before his coming, that there is a house not made with hands beyond the grave!

Perhaps it would be unnecessary to add any more. But whatever is not actually brought forward, is always denied by my adversaries. And I will therefore farther state, that the doctrines of the Trinity *, the Godhead of Christ, the personality of the Spirit, the justification of sinners by Christ's death, with all the consequences of that doctrine,—in one word, every thing positive in Christianity, except the doctrine of Christ's re-

* Translation, p. 277.

surrection, (to which, strange to say, a sort of assent is reluctantly given, and which Wegscheider considers as a proof of God's satisfaction with Christ's conduct, but not of a divine mission!)—are treated by him as perfect absurdities—the mere dreams of the Apostles, (as in the case of the atonement,) or the fancies of ecclesiastics. Nay, farther still, it is the express doctrine of this writer, in the very section from which Dr. B. takes his second extract, that all which the Apostles taught was only intended for people of their own day, though we may draw from it a knowledge of Christianity, which may be accommodated to *the illumination of a more cultivated age* *.

* The account given by Dr. Staüdlin of Wegscheider may perhaps be more satisfactory to some readers than mine. He tells us then, that it is Wegscheider's opinion, that a supernatural religion is at variance with God's perfect power, wisdom, and goodness,—that all peculiar miracles and mysteries must be explained on natural grounds,—that Christianity was made known to men by a particular divine providence, and deserves to be called divine,—that it comes the nearest to the idea of a true religion,—that still it was shaped so as to meet the particular feelings of the age in which it was promulgated, and mixed with mythi and traditions,—that Jesus or his disciples in *matter* and *form* and *negatively*, accommodated themselves to existing circumstances—that of *positive* accommodation to errors on the part of Jesus, there is no clear proof in the New Testament: but that, if

He who so thinks may talk of a mediate inspiration and may not deny the excellence of Christianity, but he denies every thing that raises it above a human system,—every thing, in short, which gives comfort to man's mind, sensible of

it is admitted, we must assume, that he could not in all points raise himself above the views of his contemporaries, and that there were some things which he knew nothing of,—that Christianity is not only subjectively but objectively perfectible,—that it was first delivered to rough men, and is not perfect. Miracles, in the Biblical sense, are only extraordinary circumstances, calculated to excite belief. In a strict sense they cannot be reconciled with God's perfection,—the more ignorant and superstitious a people is, the more they are inclined to believe in them. The witnesses are not always credible, they tell us their own belief—introduce mythi, &c. The belief in miracles is prejudicial to virtue, and they are not sufficient tests of truth, a declaration on which I need not add that Dr. B. comments at great length. Neither are prophecies ;—these, indeed, if admitted, tend to fatalism. But there are no clear undoubted prophecies in the Bible. Some were never fulfilled ; some were spoken (or at least pointed out) *after* the events. Jesus *accommodated* several to himself,—his disciples raised the idea of him too high,—he appears only as a man, when the history of him is stripped of its mythic and poetic ornaments. There are doctrines in the New Testament quite at variance with those which teach the atonement. He did not rise from the dead ; for he did not die on the cross. In the promise of a general resurrection, he either spoke according to Jewish notions, or his disciples ascribe to him their own notion of the Messiah. Staüdlin's *History of Supernaturalism and Rationalism*, p. 302—307.

human weakness, and suffering under the sense of it,—every thing which Christians deem ‘sacred, dear, and holy.’ Have I, in using those words, (and speaking as a Christian,) said too much? Have I any reason to fear the verdict of Christians on this point? But even if it were true that I had used stronger language than I ought, does that alter the case? Is it not still true that Wegscheider and numberless other Rationalists deny what Christians deem the most essential of Christian doctrines? What matters it, then, whether I have spoken properly or improperly? What would it avail the criminal on his trial, if, instead of answering the charge, he complained that the witness judged too harshly of its heinousness? And what can it avail the Rationalist to say that I am prejudiced or weak, if the charge I bring is true? The *fatalis arundo* will stick in the side it has pierced, though it may have been aimed by an unskilful or a treacherous hand. And the Rationalists should remember, that the question concerns not me, but them.

This defence of Wegscheider is the single argument on which Dr. B. rests the charge of prejudice and party spirit which he has brought against me. It is not calculated, I think, to give one very high ideas of his powers as a controver-

sialist, and the remarks with which he concludes it do not entitle him to a very exalted rank as a logician. After all, he argues*, What is the mighty difference between the opinions of Messrs. Wegscheider and Rose? One husbandman thinks that the sun and rain which ripen his corn, are sent by the immediate volitions of the Deity, while the other attributes these blessings to the *general* but benignant laws of his Providence. It would be unjust to reckon one of these men to possess a proper sense of religion, and the other to be deficient in it. Yet there is no other difference of opinion between Messrs. Wegscheider and Rose, as to the origin of Christianity; the one holds that Jesus was supernaturally enlightened, while the other attributes his knowledge of divine truth to the ordinary or mediate working of Providence! After this specimen of Dr. B.'s logic, my readers may judge with what peculiar justice he complains of bad reasoning in others. Does he really see no difference between the matter in dispute and his illustration of it? Does he really fail to perceive that in his illustration, *the facts of the case are confessedly* in the ordinary course of nature, while in the matter illustrated—(I beg pardon for the word)—the first point to

* Translation, p. 25.

settle is, whether they are so or not? Before his analogy will hold, he must *prove*, what he tacitly assumes, that the miracles are no miracles; and when he has done that, I shall be happy to argue this part of the subject with him.

Having dispatched the charge of *partiality*, Dr. Bretschneider next comes * to the head of *ignorance* and *confined views*; and two pages and a half are devoted to accusing me of believing that nothing is right except the thirty-nine articles, and of never having subjected my belief to any examination, nay, of thinking that religious belief ought not to be subjected to any. This latter charge, which is made by the writer in the Allgemeine Kirchenzeitung, rests on my having said that a minister of the Church 'must not think his own thoughts, but teach what the Church teaches.' The charge is rung on these words till one is quite weary. Whether these writers misunderstand them wilfully or not, I know not; although their meaning is so plain, from the context, that I can hardly acquit them of wilful perversion. The case in a few words is this. The Rationalists do not think it dishonest to become ministers of a Church holding definite

* Translation, pp. 26, 27.

opinions, and to disbelieve and deny all its doctrines. I do. While I am a minister of a given Church, holding given doctrines, I cannot in common honesty consider myself at liberty to teach any others. If I do, I violate my trust. But, say they, What will you do, if you come to *disbelieve* those doctrines? Surely there can be little difficulty in finding an answer to that question. I must either renounce the situation I hold, as I cannot discharge the conditions on which it was given to me, or I must renounce all pretensions to the character of an honest man. It is a most false and unjust charge to say, that I wish to suppress inquiry into the evidences or the doctrines of Christianity. I have too deep a conviction of its truth, not to desire that full activity should prevail in every department of theological research. I do not indeed desire that men should begin with *assuming* the falsehood of much which is taught in the Church to which they belong, and then exert all their ingenuity in getting rid of it. Let their inquiries be candid, and then let them be as wide as possible. If any one is led by those researches to disbelieve the doctrines of his Church, let him cease to be a minister of it, and not go on, like the Rationalists, to live under its shelter and deride its doctrines. If he will not voluntarily act like an honest man, let him be compelled to do so.

But, argues Dr. B. *, Mr. Rose confesses the great pre-eminence of the Germans in other branches of study, and yet he is foolish enough to expect that in theology they should stand still. Nay, he ascribes all their errors to their carrying their inquiries *too far*, as if any research could be too deep, &c. &c. 'What an idea,' says he, 'must Mr. Rose have of literary research, if he thinks there can be such a thing as a "*too deep consideration*," a "*too deep exploring* in philosophical grounds," a point at which men ought to rest in *superficial* causes.' The passage on which Dr. B. founds his last assertion is as follows in the original. The errors of most of the Germans 'are owing to the perplexity arising from too deep consideration, from an unwillingness to rest on *obvious* causes,' &c. The Translator of my Sermons has most dishonestly rendered the word † *obvious* by *oberflächlichen*, which signifies *superficial*; and has thus made me say, that the Germans are unwilling 'to rest on superficial causes.' I say *dishonestly*, because the word *su-*

* Translation, pp. 29, 30, 31.

† Mr. Evanson, in an anxious desire to do me justice, has given my real words in his translation, and not those which are put into my mouth by my translator. Dr. B.'s argument, therefore, does not tell so well for himself in the translation as in the original.

perificial really occurs *only* four lines lower, and is rendered also by *oberflächlichen*; and I say *dishonestly*, because I have already convicted this Translator of shameless dishonesty. Whether Dr. B. reads English or not, I cannot decide. He does not always quote the exact words of the translation; but still I am unwilling to consider him in the same light as my dishonest Translator. Yet he too, who has of course taken advantage, page after page, of my (apparently) saying, that the Germans are unwilling to rest in *superficial* causes, has* taken *unfair* advantage of another expression in the same passage. I may perhaps allow that the phrase *too deep consideration* might be altered, so as to express my obvious meaning better; but Dr. B. could not fail to see *why* it was used. A Quarterly Reviewer had remarked, that Niebuhr had *not considered* certain points; and in reply to his remark I said, 'German errors do not arise in general from *want of consideration*, but from *too deep consideration*, and from not resting on *obvious* causes.' Whether that account of the Germans is *true*, I leave to others to judge; but it is at least *intelligible*, and it describes a state of mind not only intelligible, but constantly found in individuals. Enough

* Translation, p. 31.

however of this. Let Dr. B. enjoy all the advantage he can from mistranslation of my words and perversion of my meaning ; this will not alter the case, nor does it serve as a defence of his opinions. —I go on to observe that his statement, as to the necessary influence of progress in *other* sciences on the state of theology, involves the whole matter in dispute. No one can doubt that progress in learning and real knowledge will throw light on many dark places in theological study ; but the question is still as it was, Does Christianity come *directly* from God ; and if it does, are we to expect progress in that as in other things ? Has God taught us what we are to believe, or are we to go on finding this out ourselves ? If we are, Christianity is of course not a revelation. Now this is the view of many of the Rationalists, who will not allow the existence of a revelation, and so treat Christianity like a human science. When they have *proved* that this view is just, no objection can be offered to their proceedings,—but let them do that first. But, says my antagonist*, Mr. Rose really wishes to put a forcible stop to this progress of theology, and speaks of the absolute necessity of some check and restraint over the human mind in every religious society, and espe-

* Translation, p. 31.

cially over its ministers. Then follow three pages of the inquisition, and Galileo *, and civil punishments, and the use of actual force †, in checking free enquiry, and the certainty that neither the Reformation nor Christianity itself could ever have existed if my principles had been acted on. Let me console Dr. B. by assuring him, that by *check and restraint* I mean neither whips, nor racks, the fire, the sword, nor the dungeon; but simply, as I have stated elsewhere in the Sermons, and as he knows I have stated, *this one check*, that the Church should be able to say to those who disbelieve her doctrines, what they ought to say to themselves, 'Quit the ministry of a Church, the doctrines of which you hold to be false; be honest to the Church, to the people, and to yourself.' Such restraint, I take it, would not have operated unfavourably towards the Reformation, nor to any other *honest* cause.

* It is curious that one of the organs of Liberalism in this country (the London Magazine) has proved very clearly this year, what most persons knew before, that Galileo was not *persecuted* at all. But what could induce a *Liberal* Journal to take the side of such odious animals as Priests, even if they happen to be in the right? The wonder may perhaps be diminished, when we remember that the persons defended are not Protestant, but Popish Priests, who at present are in an unnatural coalition with the Liberals.

† Translation, p. 33.

Dr. B. then * triumphs over me in three pages more, for what he considers as a most extraordinary contradiction in two of my statements. In one place I have remarked, that perhaps I should hardly have deemed it wise to bring forward such a mass of mischievous and evil opinions, had not a great part of them already been spread abroad in this country by Rosenmüller and Kühnöl. Just below I have said, that I have not felt it necessary to offer any thing in *refutation* of the Rationalist opinions, for that in nine instances out of ten their opinions have been expressed a thousand times in Deistical writers, and as often refuted.

Supposing this to be a contradiction, let me ask once more, What good does Dr. B. get to his cause by proving it so? There are distinct charges made against his friends for their opinions, and the very pages of the work which contain those opinions are given. He should either prove that the citations are wrong, or that the opinions are right. To prove that I have written carelessly can do him and them no possible good. But in good truth, is there either carelessness or contradiction in what I have said? In the *very*

* Translation, pp. 33—36.

next sentence to that which he has quoted, the solution of this mighty enigma is given, as it has been half a dozen times before in the work. 'The novelty of the Rationalists' opinions is the fact of their being now expressed by persons calling themselves believers, and holding high situations in a Christian Church.' This is what I meant—simply, that is to say, that I might perhaps have hardly deemed it wise to bring forward as the opinions of men, in profession pious *Christians*, and holding high stations as Christian Teachers in Universities and Churches, positions fit only for infidels, but well adapted to be hailed with rapture by a *low* and *liberal* age. This is in fact so obvious, that nothing but prejudice could have perverted it.

Dr. B. in this part of his argument *, asks, though rather out of place, what possible good the restraint over opinion in our Church, of which I boast, has done? Is it not the fact, says he, that the Church of England is diminishing constantly, while Unitarian, Methodist, Quaker, and Independent communities daily increase? I *might* answer, that it is *not* the fact that the Church is now losing its numbers;—but supposing it were, I should still have an answer to Dr. B.'s question.

* Translation, p. 36.

Doubtless it is true that *separation* from the Church has taken place. Now such separation certainly could not happen in Germany: how should it? From what is a man to separate there? He may hear in the German Protestant Churches, even according to Dr. Bretschneider's own confessions, pure Naturalism, a sort of belief in Christianity, Socinianism, here and there orthodox doctrines, and even Mysticism. *I* teach Rationalist doctrines; my next neighbour preaches Supernaturalist opinions. He who does not like one, may easily go to the other, without quitting the Church. Indeed in quitting the Church what would he quit? Could he say, or could any one tell him? Why should a man give up, as not suiting him, what has been and may be put in any shape he pleases? With us, on the contrary, the Church teaches definite opinions, be they right or wrong. Dr. Wegscheider could not in the English Church laugh at revelation; nor could Dr. Bretschneider ask in an English pulpit, who can find the words Trinity or Atonement in the New Testament? This then is the effect of the control over opinions in the Church of England. Countless thousands of Christians, who believe (right or wrong is not the question) certain doctrines, and consider them as pure and genuine Christianity, know that in the Church they shall hear

those doctrines, and not be subject, as they would be in Germany, either to hear a variety of Christian, semi-Christian and demi-semi-Christian doctrines, or to hear no Christian doctrine at all; to hear practical theology reduced to mere expediency, on which certainly no difference of opinion can take place, and so to lose every thing which consoles and cheers the mortal, the frail and the penitent. This, I say, is the good which the control in the Church of England has done.

But next *, Dr. B. decides that I am incapable of writing on the subject I have undertaken, because it is clear I do not know the difference between *religion* and *theology*, as I have spoken of the 'Protestant Religion in Germany,' when I should have said 'Protestant Theology.' I am not, I fear, as nice as I ought to be in the choice of words; but with due deference to Dr. B. I shall still beg to use such words as express my meaning, even though he should not understand them. I did *not* mean the *Theology* when I said the *Religion*. I meant to give an account of the state of Protestantism altogether, of the Church, the Theology, &c. &c. of the Protestants. And whether the word *Religion* is the best which could be chosen, I know not; but it is commonly

* Translation, p. 37.

used in the sense I have assigned to it. The next attack * is on my ignorance of the relation of Reason and Revelation, and on my complaints that nothing is recognized which the Rationalists do not consider as agreeable with reason. Mr. Rose, says Dr. B., must allow that a man must examine to know whether Christianity is true, as he cannot know previous to examination which of the positive religions in the world he ought to respect †. This is assuredly true, and I have said so; but Dr. B.'s complaint is, that I wish the examination to apply to the external and not the internal nature of the religion. This is true *only in part*. 'Must I not,' says Dr. B. 'if any thing is offered to me as coming from God, inquire if it is worthy of him? Would Mr. Rose receive the doctrine that God does not govern the world, but exists in eternal inactivity, even if supported by any number of miracles?'—What is to be said of such a reasoner,—what answer to be given him? He states what he thinks and what he knows his antagonist will think, a palpable falsehood, and then asks, whether it could be believed even if attested by a host of miracles? Dr. B. must have strange ideas of miracles, and of the

* Translation, pp. 37, 38.

† This charge is made also by the writer in the Allgemeine Kirchenzeitung.

omnipotence of God. I presume that there is nothing very singular in my opinion that miracles * are proofs, if they exist, of the truth of Christianity, and that therefore it is first of all advisable to ascertain whether there are any miraculous manifestations of divine power in favour of Christianity. The Rationalists reason differently. They desire us first to examine the doctrines of Christianity, and see whether they are such as recommend themselves to reason: if not, to reject them at once, or keep only such as do so: and as to the miracles, as they would be of no use at all events, the moderate Rationalists take little or no account of them, and the others exert all their learning and talents to explain them away. Dr. Bretschneider † says indeed, in the regular phrase of the Socinian, that the Rationalists reject nothing but what is *contrary* to reason, not what is *beyond* it, and asserts that that principle is recognized by many writers among them. Words are easily used, but I appeal to their practice, and am quite contented to take the decision of any one at all acquainted with their works.

* On the comparative value of the miracles and doctrines of Christianity, see what I have said below in the reply to Dr. Ammon.

† Translation, p. 39.

But Dr. B. thinks* that I confound reason with self-will, (the mistake, let him be assured, is not on *my* side,) and complains bitterly of my saying, that the German Churches 'boast of it as their very highest privilege, and the very essence of a Protestant Church, that its opinions should constantly change;' and of my citing, in proof of this position, the words of Schröckh, who says that 'our divines recognize the necessity of inquiring, correcting, and ameliorating their belief as often as any new views require it, and do not deny the possibility of making that belief more free from false explanations and arbitrary adjuncts firmer in some parts, and more connected in all.' Dr. B. with that want of candour which characterises his pamphlet, *omits all notice* of the only part of this sentence, which is of any real consequence, viz. *the first*, which states, that the Protestant 'Divines recognize the necessity of correcting and ameliorating their belief as often as any new views require it;' and asks, very triumphantly, in allusion to the latter clause, whether freeing our faith from arbitrary adjuncts and false explanations is an abdicating of faith itself? It is not necessary to do any thing more than point out this gross instance of disingenuousness.

* Translation, p. 40.

Dr. B. goes on to argue, that I have entirely perverted Schröckh's meaning; for he is not speaking of Religion or Christianity itself, nor of the divine contents of the Bible, but of the theological system of the Church. And Church doctrines, he says, are in all Churches only a public exposition on the part of a certain number of Christians, how they understand the Biblical doctrines, and what they hold to be such. This I confess, is beyond me, if intended as a proof that I have quoted unfairly, or misunderstood Schröckh. I certainly understood that by the word *belief*, he meant the view of the Biblical doctrines entertained and professed by the divines of whom he spoke, and I have quoted his words under that impression; but if Dr. B. prefers his own exposition, let us take it by all means. 'The German divines then,' according to that exposition, 'recognize the necessity of inquiring, correcting, and ameliorating their *view of Biblical doctrines* as often as any new notions require it.' This is exactly what I accused them of doing. To-day they may believe in the Trinity, to-morrow they may be Arians, the third day Socinians, in each case professing to rely on the Bible. Is this desirable or not? Can this be right or not? But farther, says Dr. B. this is no new matter, for the Reformers claimed the same right, and expressly

said, that they looked on symbolical writings only as historical testimonies how the teachers of the Church at particular times understood and explained Scripture. And to prove this, he gives * a very long quotation from the Formula Concordiæ, saying,—what does the reader think?—‘that Creeds, &c. have not the *auctoritas judicis* which is due to Scripture alone, but only give a testimony for our religion, and explain it, and show how at each period the Scripture, in controverted points, was understood and explained by the then Doctors of the Church!!’ In good truth, Dr. Bretschneider is a marvellous logician! This, he maintains, is a claim on the part of the Reformers to exactly the same right as Schröckh claims for modern divines, viz. that of inquiring into the theological system of the Church. The Reformers say, for example, ‘the Nicene Creed recognizes the Divinity of our Lord. We do not believe this point of faith on the authority of the Nicene Creed, but on that of Scripture; but we appeal to the Nicene Creed to show that its authors understood Scripture as we do.’ And this, it seems, means that it is very right and reasonable to adopt Luther’s Catechism to-day, and the Racovian to-morrow! I confess I am unable to com-

* Translation, p. 42.

prehend this ratiocination; nor can I think that what follows does any great credit to my critic's understanding. 'Mr. Rose,' says he *, 'confounds Church systems of doctrine and Biblical doctrines, which are very different things. Let Mr. Rose shew us a single place in the Old or New Testament where the words Trinity †, Persons in the Godhead, Atonement, Predestination, Original Sin, &c. or a single place where it is said, the Son is the second person in the Trinity, the Spirit the third, the Father the first, &c. or, the Son has atoned for sins, or, Man has through Adam's fall lost the use of his reason and free-will. All these things are only the Church system on particular expressions of Scripture, and explanations how the Church expounds the Bible, and what consequences it draws from certain expressions.' Be it so. And what does Dr. B.'s logic prove? Simply

* Translation, p. 44.

† If the German Rationalists supply the English Socinians with a little learning, the Unitarians, it seems, repay them with a few arguments in defence of their common views. This argument is a favourite piece of folly on the part of the Unitarians. I remember a cobbler of that persuasion at Brighton, sticking up a placard in his window, offering a reward to any one who would find the word Trinity in the Bible. This argument is repeated at great length, and almost in Dr. B.'s words, in the *Allgemeine Kirchenzeitung*.

that certain technical expressions, used for convenience sake, are not found in the Bible, and that doctrines, some of which are, in the opinion of countless thousands, to be found in every page of the New Testament, are not put there in a certain form, approved by Dr. Bretschneider! His confusion, indeed, on the matter of *belief* in points of faith is beyond description. He thinks that, if a technical word is used to describe certain assertions supposed to be in Scripture, and if he can show that the technical word is not used in Scripture, the doctrine which it represents cannot be there; and that if I sum up the scattered statements of Scripture in two or three clear but formal propositions, these propositions are mere Church doctrines. Of course I may or may not be right in my view of the doctrine of Scripture; but to prove me wrong it is not sufficient to show that my technical word or my proposition is not in Scripture, but that they are *erroneous* substitutes for what is *.

* Dr. B. has been guilty of another piece of disingenuousness here. In quoting the opinion of Reinhard on subscription to articles, he calls him, very rightly, a strict *Supernaturalist*, having previously in p. 39 classed him with 'our theologians Ammon, Döderlein,' &c. *men with whom he disagreed entirely*. This is done doubtless to throw dust in the eyes of those who know Reinhard's character. If 'our theologians' Ammon and Döderlein

However, Dr. B. * soon leaves this part of the subject, to show that I do not understand the origin of the English Church, because I say that our Reformers did not pretend to discover new views, but to return to the old ones held by the

are like Reinhard, a strict Supernaturalist, how unjust must accusations like Mr. Rose's be! But I have a single word to say on the quotation from Reinhard. That writer says, that by subscription to articles, a man does not bind himself unconditionally to maintain as unalterable the opinions which at the time of subscription he thinks true,—that he is bound to enquire unceasingly,—and that every one must declare for himself whether the tenets of a particular Church agree with Scripture, which is the ultimate appeal. This passage Dr. B. brings to show how foolish I am in requiring more than so strict a Supernaturalist as Reinhard. But here Dr. B. as usual, either wilfully or ignorantly, misunderstands my meaning. I do not complain of the Rationalists for *enquiring*, if their enquiries are fair and candid, but for their line of conduct *after enquiring*. I agree entirely with the spirit of the citation from Reinhard. I do not indeed hold it advisable for a man to spend his whole life in enquiring whether he can pick holes in his own faith, as such a temper will inevitably be unfavourable to any elevation of purpose—any high improvement of himself or others. I think, however, that every teacher of religion is bound to '*keep his mind always open* to every better conviction of religion;' but I think also, that if, after due and full and fair enquiry, he finds himself in an entire state of disbelief of the doctrines which he has formerly subscribed, he is bound to relinquish his situation as teacher in the Church which professes those doctrines, and *has employed him only because he did so too*.

* Translation, p. 46.

Apostles and early Fathers of the Church. I have forgotten, he says, that the English Church was reformed because Henry VIII. wished to get rid of his wife! Poor Dr. Bretschneider! and poor Rationalists!—But the appeal to the Fathers is a mortal sin in his eyes; and he accuses * not me only, but the whole Church of England in early times, of considering the Fathers of the first century as a sort of second Bible; and he is quite sure that I have neither read the Fathers, nor can I know any thing about them, when I thus appeal to them; for—mark, reader, this fresh specimen of Dr. Bretschneider's logic, and his delicate compliment to me,—they are full of absurd opinions and errors! And he very wisely devotes four or five pages † to show that Barnabas says that Christ chose the worst men for his disciples;—that Hermas promises Revelations to those that fast;—that the Fathers of the three first centuries adopted the allegorical style of interpretation, and other absurdities, &c.—and then triumphantly asks, Does Mr. Rose agree with the Fathers in all these follies? His ingenious argument amounts to this:—You recommend our referring to the Fathers as witnesses to matters of fact. The Fathers talk a great deal of nonsense. If you had

* Translation, p. 46.

† Ibid. pp. 47—52.

read them and known this, you would not have so referred to them. Therefore you have never read them ! What is one to say, I must again ask, to such a reasoner ? Simply, I think, to beg that he will try at least to understand the passage which he has quoted from the Formula Concordiæ, and in which the German Reformers state in what light they use early creeds and writings—namely, as *witnesses*. If I were to dispute with Dr. Bretschneider, for example, on the Divinity of our Lord, and he denied my interpretation of Scripture, is it not competent to me to say, ‘ the early Christian writers understood Scripture as I do,’ without becoming responsible for their blunders* ?

* It will hardly be believed that Dr. Bretschneider, who *does* profess to have read the Fathers, gives the result of his study as follows :—‘ The Fathers of the three first centuries knew nothing of the doctrine of the Trinity, of original sin, of men’s inability to do what is right, of the satisfaction of Christ ! They had no *developed idea* of the reconciling efficacy of the death of Christ, and considered baptism as the sacrament in which only *previous sins* were forgiven, while man *himself* was to atone for subsequent ones, held various opinions as to the origin of evil, and had an infinity of superstitions as to demons, angels, the millennium, &c. Such are the witnesses to whom Mr. Rose appeals as the best interpreters of a Divine Revelation, and of the meaning of the Bible.’ Such are the views of a person defending a party which professes to read without prejudice, and to judge with impartiality !

Are these Dr. Bretschneider's notions of the study of history?—He concludes his section on the Fathers with a gross misconception of my meaning. Having recommended an appeal to the writings of the early Fathers as *witnesses*, I say,

‘ This then is the state of things on the hypothesis of a Divine Revelation ; truth was as clearly revealed at the outset of Christianity, as it ever was intended to be known ; its record is in Scripture ; and if doubt as to the meaning of Scripture with respect to doctrine occurs, we can appeal to witnesses competent from the time when they lived, and the knowledge they must have enjoyed, to remove those doubts entirely. Where then is earthly philosophy ? It is excluded. There is no scope under such a system for its discoveries,’ &c.

This, Dr. Bretschneider (*not* the Translator) makes * into a statement, that ‘ in the first Church there was no room for philosophy ;’ and then goes on to shew, that all the early Fathers attempted to apply the philosophy of the day to Christianity ! He ought at least to be contented with my Translator’s dishonesty, and not to add perversions of his own.

* Translation, p. 53.

In the course of my work, I have stated, that Semler and many of the Rationalists expunge large portions of Scripture from the canon; to which Dr. B. answers *, that the same was done in the early centuries. I never complained of Semler for ejecting any portion of Scripture from the canon, but *for doing so on bad grounds*. Unless he thought a writing *useful*, he said it could not be divine, and then he wished it ejected. What answer to this is it to say, that in the beginning of the fifth century, certain of the Epistles and the Revelation were reckoned of dubious authenticity?

Next †, because I do not think the Rationalists' idea of correcting and perfecting Christianity a very wise one, I am told, that there was something very similar in the three first centuries, when a great difference was made between the faith of the intellectual and that of the vulgar! When I complain that the Rationalists reject miracles, I am told ‡, that Luther talked of them as only fit for the ignorant and vulgar, as apples and pears are for children; and that Quenstedt, Calov, and others §, whom I praise, said that miracles require

* Translation, p. 55. † Ibid. p. 56. ‡ Ibid. p. 57.

§ Dr. B. obviously does gross injustice to these persons, when he says, from these declarations, that they thought the miracles

only *fides humana*, while the true miracles, the inward workings of Christianity on the heart, require a *fides divina*! When I complain of the indifference to religion in Germany, (which Dr. B. does not deny,—indeed he could not, as he wrote a book on the subject himself,—but which he says is dying away,) I am told, that Origen complains of the same thing in his own times; whence, by some singular process of reasoning, Dr. B. concludes, that the present indifference in Germany does not proceed from the Rationalist doctrines, and that I am therefore very much in the wrong, and the Rationalists very much in the right! After settling this, much to his own satisfaction, (I may add, with great truth, and to mine also,) he proceeds to prove*, that I am not only foolish and ignorant in general, but especially ignorant of German theology. To speak seriously, I

only intended for the contemporaries of Christ. They neither said nor thought so. Their distinction as to the two kinds of faith is perfectly intelligible. No one ever thought the miracles more than external proofs of the truth. They are not the practical amenders of the heart, nor as such intended to be the *highest* objects of faith. With respect to Luther, every allowance is to be made for careless expressions in his works. A warm temper, haste, persecution, and slander, will excuse many improprieties of phrase. I have not Luther's works at hand, so as to know whether he is fairly represented in this quotation.

* Translation, p. 59, and following.

had hoped from a person like Dr. B., some corrections, in this part of his work, of such errors as very probably might have found their way into one like mine. I should readily have received, nay, I should have been thankful for such corrections. I was aware that I had taken all the means in my power to gain information, and all possible diligence to represent every thing fairly, but still, as I have said before, a foreigner is always liable to fall into errors in going into so extensive a subject. Let us see then what Dr. B. charges as the extent of mine. First, he says, that I have thrown all the opinions differing from the orthodox ones together, when in fact there are four distinct sets of such opinions. Now the fact is, that I carefully and distinctly state*, that I do not seek to do more than indicate the general tendency of the sentiments of the Rationalists, and that the *full extent* of the opinions of which I complain, is not held by *all* the divines of whom I speak. By what right then does Dr. B. bring this unjust accusation against me? I might ask, with equal truth, whether there is any real foundation for his formal classification,—whether almost all the Rationalists (I except perhaps one or two fanatics) did not set out from the same *principles*,

* Translation, p. 70.

and travel along the same road, the only difference between them being that some went a little farther and some stopped short *.

Wegscheider, in speaking of Rationalism and Rationalists, § 9, 10, 11, 12, makes no formal division, but, like myself, treats the Rationalists as guided by one principle, but ‘vario modo recedentes’ from Supernaturalism. And in a MS account of the Neologist school, lately put into my hands, drawn up by a Socinian of considerable abilities and learning, (resident for some time at

* The Rationalist principle as to Revelation in one word is this, that we are not after the old fashion,—first to enquire whether what professes to be an immediate Revelation from God is really so, and then entirely to submit ourselves to the doctrines it contains, but that we are to begin by enquiring into the doctrines it contains, and ascertaining whether they are agreeable to our (miserably imperfect and shallow) conceptions of what a Revelation ought to be. The difference between the various classes of Rationalists has arisen from their own inconsistency. Assuming this as their principle, some timid spirits have, nevertheless, been afraid of pursuing it to its full consequences, and have endeavoured to patch on here and there a positive doctrine to their scanty creed. Such men are, perhaps, hardly less mischievous, and assuredly they are more contemptible, than the bolder members of the party, who, having convinced themselves of the truth of their principle, follow it wherever it leads them, *per fas et nefas*.

Göttingen) the following observation occurs:—
 ‘All did not go equally far: there was a distinction made of Rationalists, and Naturalists, which appear however to me degrees only of the same thing.’ However, I am quite willing to give my readers the benefit of Dr. B.’s classification, begging them to observe, that he *omits* all notice of the most prominent writers in his classes, and begging them also to observe the statements made as to the condition of German theology since 1750, by one of the Rationalizing divines.

The *first* class *, says Dr. B., considered Revelation as a superstition, and Jesus either as an enthusiast or a deceiver. To this class belong Wünsch and Paalzow, but *no divine*. I have myself said †, that *few* writers attacked our Saviour’s *character*; but, be it remembered, that I have cited books where he was treated at all events as an enthusiast, and that Bahrdt himself, originally a divine, goes farther still.

The second class does not allow that there was any *divine* operation as to Christianity in *any* way, and refers the origin of Christianity to mere natural causes. They make the life of Christ a romance, and him a member of secret associa-

* Translation, p. 60.

† Ibid. p. 80.

tions, and consider the Scriptures as only human writings, in which the word of God is not to be found. To this class belong Bahrdt, Reimarus, and Venturini, (the two last *not* divines), and perhaps Brennecke.

The third class comprises the persons usually called Rationalists. They acknowledge, in Christianity, an institution divine, beneficent, and for the good of the world, and Jesus as a messenger of God, and they think that in Scripture is found a true and eternal word of God,—only they deny *any supernatural and miraculous* working of God, and make the object of Christianity to be the introduction of religion into the world, its preservation and extension, and they distinguish between what is essential and non-essential in Christianity, between what is local and temporal, and what is universal. That is to say, they allow that there is good in Christianity—that all that is good comes from God; and, therefore, that Christianity comes from God: but miracles, inspiration, every thing *immediately* coming from God, they wholly disbelieve. Among this class, Mr. B. reckons Kant, Steinbart, Krug, as philosophers; and as divines, W. A. Teller, Löffler, Thiess, Henke, J. E. C. Schmidt, De Wette, Paulus, Wegscheider, and Röhr.

Last of all comes the fourth class *, which goes a little higher, and (as Dr. B. says) considers the Bible and Christianity as a divine Revelation in a higher sense than the Rationalists; assumes a revealing operation of God distinguishable from his common providence, carefully distinguishes the periods of this divine direction, founds the divinity of Christianity more on its internal evidence than on miracles, but especially separates Church-belief † from the doctrines of Scripture, reforms it according to the sentiments of the Divine Word, and requires that reason should try Revelation, and that Revelation should contain nothing *against*, though it may well have much *above* reason. Döderlein, Morus, Reinhard ‡ did,

* Translation, p. 62.

† This perpetual confusion is most extraordinary. Church-belief, as Dr. B. calls it, is a setting forth of Scripture doctrines, as the composer of the form believes them to exist in Scripture. They may be rightly or wrongly set forth, but they still profess to be a mere *setting forth* of Scripture doctrines. Dr. B. says, he and his party adhere to Scripture. If they are asked, do you then believe that Christ is said to be God in Scripture? he must answer either yes or no; and, as soon as he has done so, he too is a setter forth of Scripture doctrines.

‡ I beg the reader to refer to the note in p. 77.—What will he think of Dr. B.'s honesty when he reads the following extract from Reinhard? 'I could not dissemble from myself,' says he, 'that to be consistent, one must adhere *exclusively* either to rea-

and Ammon, Schott, Niemeyer, Bretschneider, and others do, belong to this class.

Such is Dr. Bretschneider's view of things in Germany. Let me repeat, not only that I have stated the existence of differences generally, but that I have in some cases actually pointed out what Dr. B. has done. For example, I have stated that Döderlein (though not always quite consistent) held higher notions as to Scripture than many others. But passing this over, let me ask, whether Dr. B.'s statement in any degree shakes mine? Nay, let me ask, whether his statement is in any degree a fair one? The impression he wishes to convey is, that only *a few* of the theological writers in Germany have been violent, while the larger class *son or Scripture*; that there are no consistent reasoners but the Deist and the partisan of Revelation.' He goes on to expose at great length the inconsistency of the Rationalists,—of those who attempt to unite the claims of reason and Revelation *to authority*, and to point out the evils arising from this plan in Germany. Then he says, 'that he saw that there was no plan for him but either to adhere firmly to natural religion, and reject the Gospel and all divine Revelation; or to attach himself as firmly to the system of Revelation, and *to make reason subordinate to Scripture in matters of faith.*' He next states his long attachment to Revelation, and concludes with saying, that 'he had no choice; he was compelled to embrace the side of Revelation, and *admit all which could be proved by Scripture.*'—Reinhard, *Lettres*, p 99—106.

has held the mild opinions which he professes to hold himself. To both these points I have a little to say. First, let any one refer, not to my work, but to Winer's Handbuch, to Enslin's Bibliotheca, or I might say, to any tolerable German Catalogue; let him remark who are the most voluminous among the theological writers, and then let him ask, how it is that in Dr. B.'s studied and formal enumeration nine-tenths of these are omitted? What Dr. B.'s motives for omitting them might be, I have no right to say; but this I will state without fear of contradiction, that had he noticed them he must have altered his statements. What could Dr. B. say—to select a few out of many—of Bauer, and Dathe, and Vater, and Gabler, and Augusti, and Eckermann, and Tieftrunk, and the early writings of Kaiser, and others? If he will meet me on this ground, if he will prove that the authors I have referred to, and many others whom I have passed over, are not *violent* Rationalists, he will indeed benefit his cause. But on this material point he is silent, wholly silent. He insinuates that I have exaggerated the numbers, and distorted the opinions of the Rationalists, and then in a studied and formal enumeration, made expressly to refute my statements, he drops all mention of the majority of these writers, of the most voluminous and the most violent. But,

next, he is anxious to have it believed that his own opinions, which he states are the prevalent ones, are of a different order from those of Wegscheider and the more violent writers. Why does he not tell us what his opinions are? How easy would it be, instead of mystifying the reader by speaking of a revealing activity of God, to say, that he believes Christianity either to be a revelation or not, that he conceives Christ to have been either a Moral Teacher, or a Divine Messenger, or a Divine Being, as the case may be, and that he accepts or rejects the doctrine of the atonement made for sin by the death of Christ? But there is not a word said, beyond those I have quoted, to enable us to decide how high or how low in the scale of Rationalism he stands. He classes himself with Ammon; and it is not very difficult to tell what that writer's opinions *were* *. Let any person refer, for example, to the citations I have made from his writings, and say what they think of his Christianity. Let them, while they have Dr. B.'s declaration, that Ammon, like himself, considers Scripture as a revelation in a higher sense than other Rationalists do, fresh in their mind, read the following additional extract from Ammon's Preface to the 5th Edition of Ernesti's Institutio:

* See ch. V.

It is easy to understand that pious and good men, who refer all events to God, would write especially of the commencement of a new religion, so as to have the will, works, and decrees of the Deity perpetually before them; an observation, the truth of which every page of the New Testament attests. In explaining these narrations, it is the duty of an interpreter not only to translate the words of the writer, but to give the clear sense of what he says, to refer effects to their causes, confine events by proper laws *, and by this strong mark distinguish *traditions* from *narrations*, and *dreams* from *facts*. It is not sufficient to remark, on Matt. iii. 17, that a voice was sent from heaven at the baptism of Jesus. “Adde potius e loco parallelo, Joh. xii. 29. βροντὴν γεγενῆσθαι, &c. de liquido, cui suam quivis sententiam, ceu oraculo divino, substernere solebat.” So, on Acts ix. 4, where it is said that Paul talked with Jesus from the clouds, a good interpreter will appeal to a place of clearly similar meaning, xxii. 17, where it is plainly said, “that the Apostle, being in an ecstasy, spoke with Jesus.” If this right is denied us in explaining Scripture, why

* The Latin words are *eventa legibus idoneis alligat*, which may be, *confine events to proper laws*; but Ammon's Latin is fearfully bad, as well as Wegscheider's.

do we try to explain it? why not suffer every one in reading Scripture to be wise or foolish as he will? why do we not leave it to any one to fill it with figments, allegories, and other fanatical opinions?

Need I add any more on this point?

But Dr. B. follows these remarks with another of great truth in itself, but not applicable here. He says *, that it is not fair to judge of an age by the opinions that pass through it, but by those which it finally adopts and adheres to. And he adds †, that there are four classes of opinions which have been presented to the German public. (1.) Suppositions and hypotheses of learned men, attacked as soon as published, and since forgotten: for example, those of the writer of *Horus*, Bahrdt, Venturini, Reimarus, Eck, Brennecke, &c. with many of Semler. (2.) Hypotheses which gained for a time a good deal of applause and currency, but were still much opposed, and are either now given up, or only held by few: as, for example, the *moral* interpretation of Scripture, (he means Kant's) the explaining it in a modern sense, the theory of accommodation in its greater

* Translation, p. 65.

† Ibid. p. 66.

extent, the natural explanation of miracles, &c. (3.) Views which have gained reception, but only with the smaller part of theologians: as the peculiar system of *Rationalism*, as set forth by Röhr and Wegscheider; and (4.) Views such as are held by himself, (and described above,) and, as he says, by the greater part of the *Clergy* and *Laity*. These alone have, according to Bretschneider, found any resting-place in public opinion, and of these, therefore, alone ought I to have spoken. Now this inference I deny altogether. For the last thirty or forty years, by his own confession, all sorts of wild and absurd opinions have been openly taught by very many writers of credit, and in the German Protestant Churches some of them are still retained; while in other quarters, a less violent but still most material declination from the ancient belief of the Lutheran and Calvinist Churches has prevailed. That there may be a tendency in both parties to relinquish the more obnoxious part of their opinions,—that is to say, that a fresh change of views may have taken place, I am not concerned to deny. Now it is all this precisely which I have stated; it is this which appeared to me to present a most striking and instructive lesson to us. What indeed can be more striking than to see the Ministers of a Church, Professors of Divinity, &c. &c.,

throwing about, as if in sport, opinions, either subversive entirely of Christianity, or reducing it to mere Socinianism, and setting at defiance the Church to which they belong? Why it is unfair and improper to state what has been thus going on, I am at a loss to understand. It may be perfectly true that the most violent opinions are declining. What is violent seldom lasts; and I have too firm a reliance on God's providential care for his Church, to believe that he will not find a remedy for this mischief. But it is not the less true that the mischief *has* existed, and it is not the less advisable to inquire into its cause, and profit by the lesson which the inquiry gives. But let me ask most of all, whether Dr. Bretschneider's opinions are not such as to justify me in the eyes of all Christians above Socinianism. I have no wish to argue who is right or who is wrong, but I wish to ask, whether Dr. Bretschneider believes Jesus to be a Divine person, whether he believes that our justification is procured through his death, and that our sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit. Let him answer these questions in the sense in which he knows they are put, and if his answers be in the affirmative, I will certainly retract with respect to his party.

Last of all, Dr. B *. attacks the sources from which he is pleased to think I have derived my information. I happened in my Preface to mention as *convenient* books, a slight sketch by Tittman, Schröckh's History, a work of Bahrdt's, and Wegscheider's well-known volume; and I added, that as I could not get in this country some of the OLDER works 'necessary for illustrating *the growth and progress*' of these opinions, I had FOR THEM (not for any others) referred to Ernesti's Theological Review. Dr. B. assumes very artfully, that these are my *only* written sources of information, and then he pronounces that Tittman's work is only a short *imperfect* account of a part of the subject †. I never said it was more; nay, I mentioned that it was not well thought of, but that it was convenient as a compendium. But Ernesti's book is obsolete, says Dr. B ‡. and it is quite absurd to refer to it!

* Translation, p. 69.

† This censure as it stands in Dr. B's. work applies to Schröckh and not to Tittman,—but this I conceive to be a mere mistake in printing. The work he speaks of he describes as short, and coming down to the time of Kant. This applies to Tittman, whereas Schröckh has written one history in thirty-five, the other (since the Reformation,) in twelve volumes.

‡ Translation, p. 71.

Why, in the name of wonder ? Was Ernesti not learned and not candid ? Did he not represent fairly the opinions of the writers he reviewed *in his own day* ? I have appealed to him for nothing else.—Then ‘Bahrdt’s work is contemptible and long forgotten.’ Be it so. I have no doubt that the Rationalists wish it forgotten ; but it is still, as I said, very convenient, for it is a systematic exposition of the Lutheran faith, with short notes below the text, stating the new opinions, so that reference can be made to any subject at once. And the opinions briefly stated by Bahrdt are those of many of the Rationalists, repeated a thousand times in various works.—Are such books, asks Dr. B., sufficient to give a view of the progress and the present state of Rationalism * ? Certainly not ; and he cannot but be aware that I never pretended they were, but that in the notes I have referred to a *vast number* of authors for this purpose. Such an artifice is not worthy a person

* Dr. B. here very properly points my attention to the *periodical* works of Germany, a very important branch of their literature undoubtedly. It is curious enough that one of my English assailants, a Mr. Hett, imagines, with that perfect acquaintance with Germany for which our countrymen are so remarkable, that the German Journals are like our Monthly and London Magazines, and is extremely severe upon me for having referred to them so constantly.

of Dr. B.'s reputation.—He goes on to state *, that in his opinion I have derived most of my knowledge from certain friends of mine, Anti-Rationalists, in Germany: and he subsequently alludes to *one*. Nay, one of the Journals † on his side of the question designates Professor Tholuck in particular as my informant. And the Translator of the Sermons in his preface brings forward the same charge, expressly stating, that it is impossible (good man!) that I should have myself gained all the information I have brought forward, an observation which perhaps I ought to consider as complimentary. However, in justice to Professor Tholuck, I beg to say, that I am not in any way acquainted with that gentleman, and never received the slightest communication from him. But I beg to make a still stronger statement, namely, that I received no assistance whatever from any friend, German or English, beyond that *actually stated* in the notes. As Dr. B. shamefully misrepresents that assistance, let us see to what it amounts. In pp. 115 and 117, I mention, that 'my knowledge as to the oath on going into orders, was derived from Germans on whom I

* Translation, pp. 71, 72.

† The Allgemeine Kirchenzeitung for Thursday, Oct. 12, 1826, and the Appendix to it, called Theologisches Literatur-blatt, for Friday, Dec. 15. No. 100. p. 1809.

could depend.' It was so. I derived that information from a young Clergyman of the highest character, and a Layman of exalted learning, who has long paid especial attention to liturgical questions; both of whom I met *out* of Germany. But of their private opinions on religion I know nothing, and I should have offended against the decency of private intercourse if I had presumed to inquire. The friend mentioned in p. 161, is an English gentleman; and the persons referred to lower in that page, and in p. 162, were all *Laymen*, who gave me no *opinions* of their own, but merely spoke to *facts* which they had themselves known when studying in the Gymnasia. The information as to the incomes of the Clergy in the north of Germany, in p. 185, came from some English friends long resident at Dantzic; and finally, the friends spoken of in p. 166, were English friends. All farther assistance I beg entirely and positively to disclaim; so that all Dr. B.'s long dissertation, and his hope that my German friend, who has given me such a black picture of German theology, may see his answer to me, has been written in vain. Some part of it is indeed ridiculous in other respects. He says*, I have a very absurd *correspondent* in Germany,

* Translation, p. 72.

because I express, in p. 182, ' my sincere pleasure in knowing, that in Germany a better order of things may be expected. Some of the Rationalists have openly retracted—some are silent—the system is on the decline—and the new appointments to the theological chairs are made from a better class of thinkers and scholars.' What made him think of a correspondent, I know not. I was only repeating what I had stated elsewhere, on the authority of *printed* documents. And on the authority of those documents I beg to ask Dr. B. who says, that no one knows any thing of all this in Germany, whether he means to deny, for example, that Ammon has retracted?—that Kaiser has retracted?—that De Wette has retracted? Does Dr. B. indeed know nothing of this? If that is true, I, at least, am not answerable for his ignorance of what others know. But does he not know that there is a determination in the Governments to discourage the Rationalists, and appoint persons of different opinions to situations in the Universities and elsewhere? Does he indeed know nothing, for example, of an ordonnance of the Grand Duke of Baden against the Rationalists? Most assuredly he does. Even within the last few months, he knows of a contest with regard to this very Professor Tholuck, who has been seated in a fresh professorship, to the great discomfiture of the Rationalists.

But I have now a more serious matter to discuss with Dr. Bretschneider. I have said *, that 'I assert, on the faith of public and recorded as well as private testimonies, that these doctrines were publicly taught from the pulpit †. Nay, I have not seen any contradiction to this from any of the party themselves, except as to the generality of the usage. They allow its frequency, &c. Dr. B. says, that no doubt these doctrines were taught in the lecture room, but ‡ that it is *untrue* that they were taught in the *pulpit* §. Now, in the year 1822, though he has forgotten it, he himself published a book, (*Ueber die Unkirchlichkeit dieser Zeit*), in the 49th and 50th pages of which, he *admits* the fact which he now denies. He states there, that the change of religious opinions had great influence *on the sermons*, the books of religious instruction published

* Translation, p. 83.

† Dr. B. quotes this—'brought forward from the pulpit and the professor's chair.' The last clause is an addition of his own. It is of no consequence—but it is as well in a *direct* quotation to quote only what you find.

‡ Translation, p. 73.

§ Dr. B.'s strange logic here shows itself again. To prove that the Rationalist principles were not taught in sermons, he refers me to sermons where such doctrines are not taught. It were much to be desired, that he would learn the difference between negative and positive.

by the Clergy *for the young* and for the people, and that *many* preachers used these means to alter the people's opinions on religion. Within sixty years, says he, the sermons have altered very much, and in *contents, tone, and form*, have followed the spirit of the age ! This needs no comment, or I could give a very ample one. Want of truth, no doubt there is, but whether with me or not, others may judge ! After this specimen, I need hardly reply to his angry comment on my saying, that the neological doctrines were taught in the Gymnasia, and that the miracles were then spoken of with contempt. He says, that I cannot prove this to be *generally* true, and I have myself said, that my information was, of course, private. But I may observe, that he himself allows, that the change in opinions had great effect on the religious instruction given by the Clergy to the *young* ; and I can only repeat what I have said, that from testimonies I cannot doubt, it was common for these doctrines to be taught both in the Gymnasia and in the preparation for confirmation. Dr. B. is very eloquent in his anger against me for this charge ; but he must remember, that he only brings assertion against assertion. I cannot, too, but remark, in what a situation he himself places the Rationalists. That a large body of the Clergy went forth from the Universities

imbued with the opinions of one or other of the classes of whom he has spoken, even he will not deny. If they did *not* teach the opinions they believed, what did they teach? Does he mean, that in their instructions to the young, (where they could not evade the point, as they might in the pulpit, by preaching morality founded on expediency,) they taught what they did not believe? Such is indeed the alternative to which their persisting to remain in a situation, for which their opinions unfitted them, must necessarily have reduced them. They must have been compelled either to enforce what they considered as falsehood, or to do what Dr. B. allows would have been dreadful, to impress opinions on the young, the poor, and the ignorant, which in them, at least, would most probably destroy every vestige of religion, and therefore of morality.

I have now concluded my notice of Dr. B.'s strictures. The task of examining them has been any thing but pleasant; for it has consisted, not in defending my principles, but in correcting the errors, and complaining of the evasions and perversions of my adversary. Yet it will not, I think, be labour entirely thrown away. On the one hand, the miserable defence which Dr. B. has offered for the Rationalists, is the best proof of

the state of their cause ; on the other, I feel that I may in future be fairly released from the necessity of noticing any attacks from Dr. Bretschneider. It cannot be required that I should enter into farther controversy with a writer, who, instead of a frank and open defence, meets me with mere special pleading, and who neglects, or is ignorant of the common laws of courtesy.

V. DR. AMMON.

Die unveränderliche Einheit der Evangelische Kirche. Eine Zeitschrift von Dr. Christoph Friedrich von Ammon. Zweites Heft. Dresden, 1826.

I HAVE had the misfortune to give Dr. Ammon personal offence, in some degree by the epithets 'vain and rash,' which I could not refrain from applying to his early writings, but still more, I apprehend, by speaking of his Latinity as barbarous. This last is an offence which he cannot forgive; he threatened me with castigation in his first number, and the storm has broken in ten very atrabilious pages in the second. I regret this unfeignedly, for although Dr. Ammon is far from a powerful writer, he is now, I believe, a right-minded one, and he and I are fighting on the same side of the question. But Dr. Ammon's situation is a very peculiar one, and may, to some persons, account for his loss of temper. He set out in life as a violent Rationalist. He is now shocked at these opinions, and denounces them with the same eagerness with which he once espoused them, and with that warmth which occasionally distin-

guishes the exertions of converts and proselytes. His zeal in his new cause, his attacks and his sarcasms on his old friends, have, as it may easily be supposed, not excited any very pleasant feelings in their minds. And they occasionally hint at his change of opinions in a way against which Dr. Ammon's temper is not proof. As he is not any longer a young man, it is somewhat strange that lapse of time has not taught him that the gods do not grant all things to one man. To hold violent opinions and to renounce them is a good deal; but to reproach and revile those who still persevere in them, and to expect that they will receive the attack in patient silence, is rather too much. To renounce error under honest conviction is wise, right, and honourable; nor can there be any reason why the convert should not openly oppose what he once openly and wrongly defended. But he should do it in temperance, in candour, and in charity*.

* Dr. Ammon, I apprehend, alludes to his own case in the following remarks, which I find in a prefatory essay, prefixed to the first number of the *Unver. Einheit*, and intended to explain its views. After observing, that it is not right to draw any inferences against the unity of the Church from errors and a spirit of sectarianism prevailing in it, (a pretty strong doctrine) because as weeds grow up among corn, so the seeds of unbelief and false reasoning spring up perpetually in the human heart, he goes on thus. 'If then Protestant writers have produced doctrines irreconcilable with

These plain truths Dr. Ammon forgets, and is angry beyond measure, when any of his former friends complain of him. He has, for example, appropriated (I believe very rightly) some remarks made by Dr. Tzschirner on persons who, '*though the light has broken on them late enough*, are for ever painting the new theology in the blackest colours, venting miserable witticisms on its defenders, and representing the variety of opinions in the Protestant Church as a serious evil *.' And

the foundations of their Church, they did it out of their order, *nay, against their oath and their duty*, and their apology must be, that they acted either from a love of scribbling and from precipitancy, or from the proper wish to spread the reign of truth. And not only will candour and knowledge of human nature justify this second supposition, but it is strengthened by observing, that the bolder Naturalists never left the Church, nay, even defended it against its enemies. If these men are now truly Christian teachers in heart and spirit, we may say of them as of Augustine and Luther, that in their riper years they voluntarily brought themselves into the spirit of their Church, and that, like St. Paul, they now defend that truth which they before denied or attacked.' (Unveränd. Einh. Pt. I. p. 36.) In several places he recognises *the necessity of creeds*, and (p. 55.) he says, that one end of his work is to show, that 'if Reason forgets that she must learn from God and thence unboldens herself to judge of his holy word, she must be put under the authority of faith, for the *dignity of Jesus and the divinity of his Gospel are not consistent with Rationalism.*'

* Dr. Ammon's reply does not do much credit to his candour. Dr. Tzschirner, a *liberal* Protestant, twenty years ago praised a

he is very angry with Dr. Tzschirner for thus ranging himself, as he says, 'on Vicar Rose's side.' He would show both his good sense, his candour, and his Christian disposition far more, by bearing in patience those statements of his former opinions and his change, which are strictly true, and which, if he had the right feeling to see it, can now do him no discredit, but must rather tend to exalt his character. He judges differently, however, it would seem, and is worked into absolute frenzy by Dr. Tzschirner's and my allusions to his early Rationalism and his conversion *, though I at least, so far from blaming, praised his renunciation of his error. That and the charge against his Latin are too bad to bear. And accordingly he attacks me most furiously, although we are so much agreed against the Rationalists, that I might almost make my strongest statements in his words. What, for

work of Ammon's (then a liberal Protestant too) as agreeing with Scripture, and showing the possibility of an union of Reason and Revelation. Dr. Ammon having changed his opinions, quotes this commendation as proving Dr. Tzschirner's inconsistency in attacking him now. Dr. Ammon ought to remember, that as his opinions have altered, so has he altered every edition of the work alluded to !

* There is a very severe and stinging note on this subject, levelled at some individual, perhaps Dr. A., by the Translator of my Sermons, p. 108.

example, is his reply to Tzschirner, who, like other Rationalists, thinks unity even in essentials of no consequence, and says, that it is enough to believe 'that in the Gospel, God proclaims himself as not only a righteous judge, but as rich in grace, and merciful; that Christ is the Saviour of the world, and brings men to God; and that the hope of pardon lies, and can alone be found, in a heart-renewing and sanctifying faith in the merciful One in heaven, whom the Saviour of the world has revealed,' Dr. Ammon, as an old Rationalist, well knowing that these fine words mean nothing, makes the following admirable answer. 'Yet among many opinions, one only can be true; yet we ought to acknowledge the pure full truth which frees us from the dominion of opinions; yet the aim of our endeavours ought to be, not the imperfection which, by human frailty, can scarcely be avoided, but a fullness and unity of knowledge; yet we ought to hold fast at least to the essential truths of salvation, and not to say that it is a matter of indifference whether God is one with the world or not—whether his decree to make us happy, is absolute, or dependent on his wisdom and love—whether Christ was a man like Luther, or the Son of God—*whether he is the Saviour of the world only as a Teacher, or as a Mediator*; yet we ought to place our hope for pardon

not only in that trust in a merciful Judge, which is the trust of Judaism and Islamism, but in a faith in our justification before God through Jesus, as the Epistle to the Romans clearly shews, and the deep and inward connection of the Christian scheme of salvation requires. A hope for mercy from a merciful judge, preceded by no justification of the converted sinner, destroys, as Melancthon has clearly proved, not only all the Christian system of atonement, and the first distinguishing tenet of our Church, but the holiness of the moral government of the world,' &c. After going on in the same strain at some length, and enquiring why, if doctrines are of such little matter, and if a mere wish to promote a knowledge of God, virtue, and morality be enough, Deists or Unitarians should not be received into Church-communion, he ends with saying, ' Human reason is inclined to unite all the religions of the earth by generalization, but it is exactly by this abstraction, that the essence of Christianity is lost as a peculiar revelation; the essence of the Evangelical Church disappears with its positive and well-grounded dogmas; the organic unity of faith and essential doctrines without which no Church can exist, is gone; and we see, when it is too late, that not our foundation, but that which has been laid for us by God is the only true and tenable one.' Some of these words

are almost my own *, and I could not desire to have used any clearer or more decisive ones. When I add to this, that Dr. Ammon now acknowledges the necessity of a decided *creed*, talks of the power of the oath of the clergy, &c. &c. the reader will easily see that it is not difference of opinion, but personal pique, which has provoked Dr. Ammon to display such a sad want of common candour, and so entire a loss of temper and decency in writing against me. He is, indeed, so sensitive on the point of his former opinions, that he cannot bear any one except himself to speak against them. A writer whom he notices in the subsequent pages of his journal, and who, like myself, attributes to the violence of the Rationalists many conversions to the Roman Catholic Church, is attacked by Dr. Ammon for this very reason with the greatest asperity.

One word more I may be allowed to say on Dr. Ammon's present opinions. He is, I trust, too honest to use words, like his old friends the Rationalists, in an ambiguous sense. We may then surely understand from the passage I have quoted, that he now believes in the Divinity of our Lord, and in justification through his blood. And in other places † he declares clearly his faith in the mira-

* See pp. 34, 35.

† Part I. p. 66.

cles of Jesus and his Apostles. Yet he has not joined what we should call the orthodox party ; but designates their belief* as pseudo-orthodoxical Palæology †. Dr. Bretschneider too, who would never venture to assert *his own* belief in the Divinity of Jesus, or the justification of man through his blood, claims Dr. Ammon for his own ; and both in the attack on me, and elsewhere, Dr. A. speaks of prophecies and of miracles, (in which, as I have just stated, he now professes to believe,) not indeed in his former tone, but still in a tone any thing but decent and proper, as will be seen below ‡. These contradictions I notice, but do not attempt in any way to explain.

But it is time for me to leave these general matters, and to notice the charges advanced by Dr. Ammon against my work.

I cannot say, as Hooker did, that my adversary's reply consists of railings and reasons, but of railings and sophisms, or falsehoods. To the railings I shall certainly say nothing ; to the sophisms I regret that I must waste my time in saying the few words that follow.

* P. 54. † Part I. p. 55. ‡ See p. 121.

His account of the objects of my work is fair enough, while he refers to chapter and verse; but he concludes it with saying, that one of my especial declarations is, that the Bible is treated with contempt in Germany; that the German divines dedicate themselves to divinity, without any previous classical acquirements; and that I complain bitterly of the German style of explaining prophecies and wonders. For these statements he makes no reference to my work, for the very simple reason, that out of these three allegations two are entirely false. I never said that the Bible is treated with contempt in Germany*. Though I should not have gone far from the truth in saying, that they who think the sacred writers weak, or ignorant, or fraudulent, who think that some prophecies were made after the event, and that some miracles were trick, and who think that all the positive doctrines of Christianity were local and temporary, treated the Bible with contempt, I did not say it even of them; far less was I rash or violent enough to say, that the Bible was so treated in Germany at large. Dr. Ammon has therefore on this point asserted a direct and injurious falsehood.

Again, I never said, that the German divines

* This accusation Dr. A. repeats in pp. 49, 50.

had no knowledge of classical literature. In fact I said nearly the contrary,—when I state, in speaking of Paullus and others, that they were learned men as far as reading and collecting could make them so. What I really said was, that they were not scholars *of a high order*; and I regretted that the really illustrious scholars of Germany, the Hermanns, the Böckhs, the Thierschs, the Welckers, and the Buttmans, did not occasionally at least turn from the pages of profane literature, to shed the light of their great talents and profound learning on the interpretation of Scripture. Had they done so, the weak and perverse trash with which Scripture has been depraved and polluted by some of the Rationalists, would never have been heard of, and one source of mischief would have been entirely stopped. These perversions of my words are disgraceful.

Dr. Ammon, like my other antagonists, next tries to get rid of my accusation by recriminating on the Church of England. The folly with which he does so, it would not be easy to match. Mr. Sheridan, he says, once wrote a satirical sermon for a Bishop who was dining with him, and the Bishop preached it the next Sunday! And besides this, an Atheistical English Bishop once travelled on the continent. Such things could

not happen in the German Church, though Mr. Rose says, there is so little controul in it over the Clergy !

Whether the story of Mr. Sheridan be true or not, it is not worth while to enquire ; but in what a state must that man's understanding be, who would draw inferences as to the condition of a Church, because it had at one time a mad Bishop, and at another a foolish one ! nay ! more,—who could think such charges against another Church any defence of his own !

The next thing worth notice is, Dr. Ammon's exceeding anger about his Latin. He wishes his readers to believe, that part of my charge against the Rationalists is, that they write bad Latin. The fact is, that I noticed the matter only incidentally in a note, and simply because I was not always sure that I understood the strange semi-German, semi-Latin phraseology in which Ammon, Wegscheider, and others write, and was afraid I might misrepresent them. But Dr. Ammon enters into a long and laboured defence of his parts, and tells us, that solecisms have been found in Erasmus, Scaliger, &c., that some learned English have committed errors, and that a member of Parliament blundered in Aristænetus between Median and Medical.

Poor Dr. Ammon! I am sorry he is so much distressed about his Latin, and still more sorry that he has nothing better to say for it.

He next seeks to convict me of positive errors. Those which he alleges are curious, and to me most satisfactory. If these are the only errors his penetration can discover, I have not much cause for alarm. The first is as follows: I said that 'these statements of Wegscheider are repeated by Ammon.' Now the work of Wegscheider, to which I referred, was published in 1815, while Ammon's appeared in 1803. Dr. Ammon thinks, that by using the word *repeat*, I meant that he *copied* his statement from Wegscheider. If I had, the matter would have been of little moment. Which of two contemporary authors first made a statement *peculiar to neither, but found in many writers prior to both*, is really a point of so little importance, that there would be no great harm in not comparing the dates on their title-pages. But the truth is, that I only meant that what was expressed in Wegscheider, is *also expressed* in Ammon. I had said just before, in the same intention, 'all these views of Wegscheider are held by Ammon.'

Again, I have said, that Döderlein quotes Am-

mon's Christology, whereas, says Dr. A., Döderlein died in 1792, and Ammon's work appeared only in 1794. The fact however is as I stated, that (in the sixth edition of) Döderlein's work *, Ammon's Christology is referred to. There are two ways of cutting this knot. Döderlein may have seen the work in MS, which is not improbable, both because Ammon having been known as an author certainly two years before Döderlein's death, and probably more, the similarity of their opinions on many points might produce a communication between them, and because no *particular* page of the work is referred to. Or the editor of Döderlein's work may have inserted the reference. The only objection to the latter supposition is, that he professes to *mark* all he introduces, so that the reader may distinguish between his additions and the original work, and I can find no such mark attached to the passage in which Ammon's work is quoted. If this latter solution, however, as I am inclined to believe, is the true one, I, no doubt, am in error; of the extent of that error the reader will judge.—It is this,—I did not know the exact year in which Döderlein died. That Ammon had been known as a writer some years before Döderlein's death,

* Vol. ii. p. 221.

I was aware.* I saw one of Ammon's earliest works quoted in one of Döderlein's latest, and I certainly, therefore, did not suspect that it was not quoted by Döderlein himself. Indeed, if I had doubted, I had no means at hand of deciding without an enquiry, which was not worth the trouble, how long after 1791 or before 1797* Döderlein died; and I should therefore probably have written as I did, under the same uncertainty as I now am, whether Döderlein himself might have seen Ammon's work in MS, and have noticed it in the fifth edition, or even subsequently in his MS preparations for a sixth. The matter was not one of the slightest consequence; for the only fact still remains as it was stated, viz. that there is in Döderlein's work a reference to Ammon's. Accuracy, however, and minute accuracy is no doubt desirable, and I must leave it to the reader to judge, whether this error convicts me of any serious want of it. I rather wonder that Dr. Ammon's eagle eyes did not discern a clerical error, by which, as I now see, I wrote, in the tedium of transcribing, the name of *Döderlein* for that of *Wegscheider*, in

* I mention these dates, because Professor Junge, who published the sixth edition of Döderlein's work, which is the one I possess, in 1797, speaks of him as then dead; and he superintended the publication of the fifth himself in 1791.

p. 126, line 11, an error by which Döderlein's life is protracted to 1817. Had Dr. A. not failed to perceive it, he might have sounded a still louder note of triumph.

In return for Dr. A.'s accusations of me, his next remark affords me ample grounds for one of a serious nature against himself. In his Preface to the fifth edition of Ernesti's *Institutio*, dated 1792, he has the singular modesty to lay it down on his own authority, (in a dissertation of a few pages, prefixed, too, to a work intended to give safe and right principles of Hermeneutics) that many of the miracles in the New Testament are no miracles at all. After observing this in one of my notes, and mentioning his strange explanation of several of the miracles, the last of which happened to be the death of Ananias and Sapphira, I added, 'let it be observed, that the vain and rash man who, without doubt or hesitation, proposed *this mass of folly and impiety*, has had also the sincerity to confess his shame for it, and that by God's grace he is now a pious and humble Christian.' How has Dr. Ammon stated this? Will the reader believe, that the following is a literal translation of what he gives as an extract from my work, and an answer to it. 'Ammon has been so sincere as to confess, that he is ashamed

of his view of the history of Ananias and Sapphira, and that through God's grace he is now a pious and humble Christian!' This is his pretended extract. Now for his answer. 'In speaking of the history of Ananias, the business was to defend Peter against Voltaire, who had set this matter in the most hateful light, and there has never been a word said of a retraction.' This is no blunder—the translator is not here in fault; but Dr. Ammon, in order to avoid what it seems he has the bad feeling to think an awkward question, has changed my assertion of the general change of his sentiments as to Rationalism, into an assertion that he has changed his opinion about the miracle of Ananias and Sapphira! And then he denies that any such change has taken place! Such conduct needs no comment *. When

* I cannot, even in charity, believe that such a proceeding could arise from error or oversight; but if I wanted any confirmation of my judgment in this respect, I should find it in the very next article to that in which Dr. A. speaks of me. He is reviewing Professor Borger's work, *De Mysticismo*; and he professes to give an analysis of the book. Professor Borger, in enumerating all the causes which have led to mysticism in Germany, considers *Rationalism* as a principal one. He gives a long account of the Rationalizing Theology, and adds, that the disgust which it caused produced a reaction, finally leading to Mysticism. Dr. Ammon very carefully copies all the other causes assigned by Borger, but *omits all notice of Rationalism*,

I said that Dr. Ammon had become a pious and humble Christian, I fear I went too far ; he has indeed renounced his ancient opinions, but I see nothing at least of Christian candour about him. His present opinion about prophecies and miracles is, that ' the Old Testament is a constant prophecy of Christ ; but that no particular prophecy of the Messiah can be pointed out, as by itself affording a full proof, without the explanation afforded by the facts of the New Testament ; and that as to miracles, the Evangelical Christian believes with Augustine and Luther in two great miracles, that of creation and preservation in the physical, and that of redemption and sanctification in the moral ; these great theologians consider all other miracles as trifling, and far below the others. Whether Jesus walked on or in the sea ; whether madness or the evil spirit was in the swine ; whether Peter's fish had a new-stamped stater in his mouth, or an unstamped one, is of little, very little consequence ; only an exegetical coxcomb can fear any danger from this quarter to his puny soul.' This method of speaking of the miracles appears to me neither decent nor

He cannot bring himself, even now, to allow any one else to state that the very opinions, which he has renounced, were mischievous, and has recourse to the most disingenuous proceedings in order to avoid these declarations.

sensible. It is true, doubtless, that the miracles addressed to our senses are intended only as *means* of faith; it is true, too, that the great wonders of creation and redemption produce a rapture and a reverence *in the Christian heart* which cannot be excited by the lesser manifestations of miraculous power. But it is true, too, that One wiser than we are, and who knew well what was in man, judged that these addresses to the senses were necessary to arouse a large portion of mankind, lost in the occupations or enjoyments of sense, to accept the doctrine to which they gave such unquestionable testimony, and thus to bring them by degrees to a better and higher state of mind. It is true, therefore, that without them, the wonders of redemption at least, would have remained, nay, would still remain unknown to a large portion of the world; and under the influence of that consideration alone, no right-minded man would speak of them lightly or irreverently, even if he felt no want of them to confirm his own faith, or elevate his own views.

The conclusion of Dr. Ammon's remarks is the only thing, I can safely say, in the whole of my opponents' attacks which has excited any other feeling than that of weariness and contempt. But however false and base his insinuation is, it

has, I confess, moved my indignation. He says, that I returned to England 'from the arms of German hospitality,' to abuse and vilify German writers. Dr. Ammon's rage is so unbounded that he seizes the first argument which offers itself, however improper or false, to injure me. It is true, I did receive much kindness in Germany; the hours which I was allowed to spend with some of the most eminent German scholars will ever live in my remembrance; and if the praise of one so obscure and insignificant as I am could be of any avail, I am ready on all occasions to testify, as I have already done, my sincere and profound admiration of the genius and learning which exalt Germany to so high a place among the nations of the civilized world. These are feelings, indeed, which must be entertained by every candid man who is at all acquainted with the *extent* of research in Germany, and who compares it with that displayed in other countries. But I have yet to learn that Germany or any other country is perfect. I have yet to learn that the laws of honour or of good feeling bind the traveller to approve all he sees in a foreign country, or to declare his disapprobation when he leaves it. If such absurdities be tolerated, foreign travel must be abandoned as a source of reflection or improvement. But even Dr. Ammon's feeble mind

cannot be open to such folly. It is his malignity which has induced him to insinuate what is utterly false, that I *abused* German hospitality. If I had retailed private anecdotes, if I had spoken of the opinions of individuals, nay, still farther, if I had sought private confidence, and made use of the information so obtained, I should deserve not only Dr. Ammon's rebuke, (that is of little moment to me or to any man) but the contempt and indignation of every honourable mind. But I have not done so. I went into Germany for purposes of health, and not to study German divinity. My introductions were to scholars, and not to divines; and they who take the trouble to look into my book will see that I refer to *printed works*, not to my own observations, and not to information obtained from any individual, except in one or two cases in speaking of points 'which might be proclaimed at Charing Cross.' In one word, I sought no private confidence and I have abused none. When my friends in Germany accuse me, Dr. Ammon has my full leave to take up the cry; till then, he ought in common decency to abstain from accusations which are directed wholly against personal character, and which are utterly without foundation.

Having thus noticed all Dr. A.'s criminations, I

must go on to lay before my readers certain admissions which he has made in favour of my statements, and thus to extract what good I can from his evil.

He allows * that my work has found here and there approval in Germany from persons of *congenial opinions* to mine; he repeats this statement in page 52; and in page 54 he hints that some of them have even done me the honour of speaking of me as a fellow-writer in the cause of real Christianity. He admits † that I certainly might find ‘often enough’ in the works of German divines, the most absurd claims made for the rights of reason; that ‡ the plan pursued in the German Church, has sometimes, through ill-timed liberalism, favoured Anti-Christianism; that it would be better for the German clergy to read the Bible and the Fathers rather than fugitive journals as they do; and § that the Rationalists in talking of the perfectibility of Christianity, fell into the grossest error, as they confounded the mutability of their subjective knowledge with the immutability of divine truth. It is pretty clear then, I must repeat, that had I not unluckily affronted Dr. Ammon

* Page 45.

† Page 47.

‡ Page 48.

§ Page 49.

about his Latin, his story and mine would not have been very different. I am happy to add, in conclusion, from a part of his critique on two works on Mysticism, his testimony against Rationalism, a testimony the more valuable as coming from one who knows it so well. 'Mysticism,' says he *, 'has this single merit, as every evil has some accompanying good, that it acts as a counterpoise to *Rationalism, which dries up the heart, and her companion Unbelief*, and prevents the entire ruin of public worship and religious feeling.' And again †, 'pure Rationalistic Protestantism is as different from the Evangelical Protestantism of the sixteenth century, as Natural Religion is from Christianity.'

* Page 67.

† Page 101.

VI. DR. BECK.

Allgemeines Repertorium, (1.) Vol. i. p. 285, for 1826; and (2.)
Vol. i. p. 28, for 1827.

I NOTICE these articles for form's sake, that I may not be suspected of passing over any of the attacks on my work. The *Allgem. Repertorium* is a sort of epitome of all new works, and hardly pretends to any criticism beyond a declaration in favour of a work, or against it. The only remarks on my work, besides calling it some names, are, that my title is quite wrong, 'because I have not given an account of the religion of the Protestants in Germany, (which may easily be far better than that of the English Episcopal Church,) nor of the state of the Protestant Church in Germany, (which has forms and aims far more favourable to religious truth than the Episcopal Church, which is dependent on stiff and spirit-killing forms,) but merely of the theology, of certain Protestant writers.' The writer moreover then says, that 'I was not long enough in Germany to ob-

serve accurately'—I never pretended to do so,—that 'German travellers in England have told me a great deal'—I never saw one before my work was printed,—and that 'I ought to read many more German books, and gain a wider knowledge of German literature.' The last recommendation I shall be most happy to take, though not exactly in the sense it is offered. I have read enough now, and too much of Rationalist divinity, and am wearied with violence, and rashness, and self-will, and ignorance.

In the second article there is only a very short analysis of Dr. Bretschneider's work, a commendation of his fourfold division of German theology, and of his temper (!), and a recommendation to translate his work into English.

APPENDIX.

A

REPLY TO THE GERMAN CRITIQUES

ON THE

“ STATE OF PROTESTANTISM IN GERMANY.”

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following pages contain a reply* to various writers, who have objected to my statements respecting Protestantism in Germany. I have made that reply as short as possible, not only for the reader's sake, but for my own. For the class of writers opposed to me is one, with which they, who know them, desire to have as little commerce as possible. I may perhaps be thought to speak in bitterness, and I therefore prefer giving the character of the German Rationalists as controversialists, drawn by one of their own countrymen, the excellent and lamented Staüdlin, in his 'Geschichte des Rationalismus und Supernaturalismus,' (Göttingen, 1826), a work of high interest, of which I heartily hope to see a translation, as the best possible confirmation of all I have said. In

* The substance of the answers to the translators of my Sermons, and to Dr. Bretschneider, has already appeared in the 'Christian Remembrancer.'

speaking of the author of a book called 'Briefe über den Rationalismus,' who, though he goes the full length of Rationalism, is remarkable for the moderation and the gentlemanlike tone in which he writes, and for the respect which he shows to the opinions and feelings of those who differ from him, Staüdlin observes, that 'many other Rationalists of our day, on the contrary, write with ill-breeding, rudeness, violence, presumption, and intolerance, that they scatter terms of abuse, and treat all who differ from them with sneers and contempt, as irrational and ignorant creatures, though they exhibit themselves a very low degree of philosophy and learning. *One cannot but be ashamed of entering into a controversy with them.*' (P. 323.) It is, indeed, sufficiently humiliating to have any thing to do with writers who cannot treat the greatest and most momentous questions, without raising a cry of knavery or folly against all who differ from them. My reason for noticing them is simply this. Their character is very little known in this country; and, however reluctant I may be to make such an accusation, my readers will

see that some of them have had unsparing recourse to one art of controversy of great service in defeating an adversary, while he who uses it can maintain his own credit, I mean, the unblushing assertion of direct falsehoods. I feel it, therefore, a duty to those who have been interested in the statements I have made, to shew that their credit is not shaken by any thing which my adversaries have advanced.

Let me add, that in what I have now said I do not mean to make any complaint of the manner in which these persons have spoken of me; but to explain why I think it sufficient to notice their arguments and assertions, and then to drop all further mention of them. On the contrary, I can say, with great truth, that all which they have already said, and all which they may say hereafter, is a matter of the most entire indifference to me. Where one is unfortunate enough to be engaged in controversy with adversaries who lay aside the courtesy of gentlemen, and condescend to abuse and personality, it is impossible to feel any pain at

their resentment, or any regret at their degrading themselves by violence and falsehood.

My readers may be interested in knowing, that a violent controversy with respect to Rationalism sprung up at Leipsic, in the course of last autumn, in consequence of an inaugural dissertation by Professor Hahn, who has been called to Leipsic from Königsberg, and who is steadily opposed to the views of the Rationalists.

In conclusion, I must state that I have been informed that the well-known Göttingen Journal, the 'Gelehrte Anzeigen,' contained a notice of my work; but that two gentlemen who have kindly undertaken to examine the numbers of that Journal for me, have been unable to find it. I mention this, lest it should be imagined that I have sought to avoid taking notice of any particular attack.

HORSHAM,

February 23, 1828.

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CHAPTER I.

I PROPOSE, in the following pages, to give some account of the recent state of Protestantism in Germany. My objects in undertaking the task are these.

The theology of the Protestant Churches of Germany presented a very singular spectacle during the last half of the preceding century, and the commencement of the present. A very large majority of the divines of these Churches rejected, in a word, all belief in the Divine origin of Christianity, and anxiously endeavoured to instil into others the opinions which they had embraced themselves. They had possession of far the greater number of divinity-professorships in the many universities of Germany; and they had almost exclusively the direction of the literary and religious journals, a class of publications of more influence and importance in Germany than among ourselves. By the unsparing use of the means thus afforded them, and by an infinite quantity of writings, addressed to men of all classes and all ages, they succeeded in spreading their views over the surface of society. How deep the disease

went among the lower orders it is not easy to ascertain. But it appears that, after a time, a spirit of almost entire indifference to religion manifested itself among all classes. The churches were thinly attended, the sabbath little honoured, the Bible much neglected. These melancholy phenomena appear to me to deserve and demand the attention of every Christian community, and I am convinced that in this country, it is very little known how far the evil extended.

In addition to the speculative interest, and probably the practical instruction, arising from the subject in general, there is a particular reason for bringing it before the English public. The divines, to whom I have alluded, have, with the characteristic industry of their nation, published laborious works in almost every department of theological inquiry. Although they rejected, as I have said, all belief in the Divine origin of Christianity, they retained the name of Christians, and the language and profession of Christianity. Since our intercourse with the Continent has become free, many of the works of these divines have found their way into the hands of English students in divinity *. It appears

* Mr. Stuart, of Andover in America, states the same fact in very strong terms with respect to the students in his own country. See the Preface to his late work on the Epistle to the Hebrews.

to me, therefore, indispensable, that these students should have a clear conception of the principles of such writers, that they may not, by the deceptive use of Christian phraseology, be betrayed, at a period of life when their own judgment is not matured, into conclusions wholly subversive of Christianity.

These are, I think, very important objects ; but I have others not less important. I have shewn in the Introduction what is the proper province of the human reason with regard to Revelation. Now the pride of the heart is perpetually tempting the reason to transgress her proper limits and go out of her proper province ; and wherever the temptation is not overcome, the most serious evils ensue. The recent theology of the German Protestants forms a striking proof of the truth of both these assertions. They judged of the truth of Revelation by its accordance with certain views of their own, which they falsely considered as immutable and universal principles of reason. This was their first and last and great error ; and it led most of them to a total rejection of Revelation. I think it most important to shew this, but even this is not the whole of the case. It still remained for those who rejected Christianity as a divine Revelation, to examine its origin, its history, and its pretensions. The historical relations of the outset of the religion (unfortunately for them) contained

on its behalf a formal claim to a divine origin, and perpetual references to the evidence of prophecies and miracles. It obviously became necessary to get rid of all belief in the value of the history, and, in the significant words of a late writer, 'to evaporate the miracles of the sacred relation.' The methods and processes by which it was attempted to gain these ends, are among the most singular instances on record of the extravagances to which a false principle will conduct the human mind. The exhibition of this false principle and its consequences is another object of great importance at which I aim in the following sketch of German Protestantism.

Last of all, I think that the strange aberrations of the German Protestant Divines are a strong proof of the necessity of an efficient and active system of Church discipline. The German Protestant Churches, although they nominally possessed such systems, had virtually given them up before the period when those aberrations began. If this had not been the case, if there had been a power of controul in these Churches, I do not believe that a large majority of the teachers in them, *i. e.* a large body of Christian Divines, would have become unbelievers. I do not say that the want of controul in these Churches was the origin and cause of their infidelity, but I say that the existence of such controul would have

checked their aberrations. I believe that such controul is necessary to all Churches, because all Churches are liable, and probably always will be liable, to the temptations of unbelief from without, and to the yet stronger temptations to unbelief from the pride of the heart within. I do not believe that these or any other human means can secure the safety of the Christian cause, which must be owing to God alone; but I believe that God, who has left the care of the Churches to man, expects that such means for their well-being and their security against contingent dangers, as experience dictates, and man's powers enable him to adopt, should be adopted. I am therefore anxious to show what evils have actually resulted from a neglect of those means, and I think that the German Protestant Churches afford as striking an instance as I could desire.

On this last point, I am desirous of making a few observations.

The following statements were written under a conviction that it is essential that the members of a Church should "all speak the same thing," that it is mischievous for one preacher to assert and another to deny the same doctrine—under a conviction, in short, that *Unity* is essential to a Church. But I do not think myself obliged to offer any proof of

a proposition so often discussed. I have no dispute with those who would wish a Socinian to succeed a Trinitarian in the pulpit, or a believer in the divine mission of Jesus to follow one who thinks that he and his religion are human. This humble work is not addressed to them. I write likewise under the conviction that if Unity is allowed or assumed to be necessary, it cannot be attained by a mere declaration of adherence to Scripture. This point has been so often, and so powerfully argued, that I do not think myself obliged to waste my readers' time with a discussion of it.

I wish also to observe, that they who argue that every Church ought to possess a right of controul over the opinions of its ministers, mean only that it ought to possess the right of laying down a plain Confession of faith, or exposition of the doctrine of Scripture on essential points, of requiring a declaration of adherence to it on that part of the ministry, and of removing the ministers who renounce that adherence. Pains and penalties are out of the question with every Christian.

This I have thought it necessary to say, because many of the answers to my remarks on the Rationalists in the former edition of this work, proceed from persons, who see no advantage arising from

Unity, and who imagine, or choose to imagine, that by controul over opinion, I either mean corporal restraint or punishment, or that I think it wrong for the Clergy to read or enquire for themselves. I never expressed nor entertained any such opinion. I only meant, and still mean, that if any man's enquiries lead him to disbelieve the doctrines of the Church, he is no longer fit for her service ; and that if he will not voluntarily resign his office, the Church ought to have the power of removing him.

In order to obviate all misconception, I think it right farther to add, that I neither profess nor intend in this work to assign the causes which led to the recent state of Protestantism ; and that I do not undertake to give a *history* of the German Protestant Churches. I undertake simply to give an account of their state during the time when Rationalism prevailed in them, and I mention such points only of their previous history as are necessary to make that account intelligible.

In the next chapter I shall shew that the German Churches did not possess any efficient system of Church discipline ; in the third I shall briefly recite a few particulars of their previous history ; and in the fourth and following chapters shall proceed to the main object of the work.

CHAPTER II.

THE great safeguards requisite for the well-being of any church, are obviously the possession of a clear and distinct declaration of faith, to which strict adherence must be required: of a liturgy which shall practically apply the doctrines of that declaration to men's wants and infirmities, and of a government which shall diligently repress every tendency to carelessness, and every attempt at innovation.

I. With regard to *declarations of faith*, the following statement will show, that though both the Lutheran and Calvinist churches of Germany nominally possess them, they virtually have none. I will first consider the Lutheran Church. When Luther's separation from the Roman church took place, it was only in the natural order of things, that the doctrines of the Reformers should be much misrepresented, and that they should feel it necessary frequently to issue declarations of their real belief, in order to silence the outcry of calumny and falsehood. Unfortunately, these declarations,

(unfit as they were, from their controversial nature, for such a purpose,) were successively adopted as rules of faith by the Lutheran church. It is unnecessary to detail the occasions on which each was composed, as a bare enumeration of them will be sufficient for my present purpose *. They consist

* The most convenient edition of the symbolical books is the recent one of Tittman; and the preface contains some valuable remarks on the subject of this Work. I may add here, for my readers' convenience, that the Confession of Augsburg, which was presented to the general meeting of the States there in 1530, was founded on a shorter paper known by the name of the Articles of Torgau, and drawn up, I think, in 1529. The Apology was published in 1531. As the disputes between the parties continued to disturb the peace of the empire, Pope Paul III, allowed the convention of a council at Mantua, in 1537, and the evangelical States who met at Schmalcald, subscribed in that year a statement of their faith (previously drawn up by Luther) which was to be presented to the council. Unfortunately, differences prevailed among various parts of the Evangelical church, which were promoted by the constant vacillations of Melancthon; and as various declarations of faith were composed in various provinces, the Elector Augustus of Saxony called a meeting of theologians at Torgau, in 1576, and required them to select from each what was true and valuable, and mould this matter into one declaration. This was the Formula Concordiæ, which (also under the name, it would appear, of the Articles, or Book, of Torgau) was sent to the various Evangelical States for approbation, and received the sanction of a meeting of princes and divines, in 1577, but was never *universally*, though generally, received by the Lutheran church. (See Schröckh, Kirchen-geschichte seit der Reforma-

of the celebrated Confession of Augsburgh, of Melanchthon's long, tedious, and inaccurate defence of it, of the articles of Schmalcald, of Luther's two catechisms, and the Formula Concordiæ. This immense

tion *, vol. viii. p. 188.) It is even longer and more tedious than the Apology. Luther's two Catechisms, the one fit for elementary instruction, the other of great extent, were, I believe, published in the same year (1529). Some information on the subject will be found in an article in the *Neue Theol. Bibl.* vol. iii. p. 867 and following. There is a work by the younger Walch, called '*Breviarium Theologiæ Symbolicæ Ecclesiæ Lutheranæ*,' (Göttingen, 1765) which contains an account of the several circumstances relating to the composition of each of the symbolical books, their date, contents, &c.; and a larger and earlier one by Walch, the father, called '*Introductio ad Libros Symbolicos*.' (Jena, 1732.) At the end of the latter work are three dissertations, one of which applies especially to the oath, but does not give any positive information as to the time when it began to lose its authority. Walch points out very strongly the necessity of retaining it, and of being governed by it, and justly observes (pp. 953 and 4) 'that men should examine beforehand, and not swear carelessly.' The oath was objected to by Böhmer *Jus. Eccl. Protestantium*, I. Tit. 12. §. 25, (vol. i. p. 465.) and Thomasius (*Theses de jure Princ. circa Hæreticos*, §. 62.) See Wernsdorf *Dissert. de Auctor. Libr. Symbol.* Aphorism. v. §. 4. Val. Alberti *Dissert. de Præstando Categoriæ in Libros Symbolicos Juramento*. Carpzov *Isagog. in libr. Eccl. Luther. Symbol.* p. 6.

* To save extended references, I would beg to mention, that when I quote Schröckh, I always mean this work, unless I specify otherwise.

mass of writings forms the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church, and somewhat earlier than the middle of the sixteenth century, subscription to the whole of them was required as a necessary step before the conferment of holy orders, or of any degree in divinity *. For a considerable period circum-

* From Schröckh (vol. iv. p. 470, and following), and Walch (*Introductio ad Libros Symbol.* p. 946—8), I learn that, in order to repel fanatics, Luther, Jonas, and Bugenhagen required, in 1531, a sworn promise to retain the true religion (See Melancthon's *Oratio adversus calumnias Osiandri*); that in 1533, at least every doctor in theology was obliged to swear to the Confession of Augsburg, and that at a meeting of the league of Schmalcald at Brunswick, in 1538, all present swore (and promised to induce their successors) to preserve the true evangelical faith; and undertook that their officers, vassals, &c. should do so. Seckendorf (*Commentar. de Lutheranismo*, vol. iii. §. 17. p. 174.) thinks, that this gave rise to the common oath taken by all in public situations (and retained in some countries to this day) to remain true to the evangelical faith. This oath was introduced in Saxony by Christian II. in 1602. In 1662 it was ordered, that all officers of the church, schools, court, &c. should take this oath. In vol. vii. p. 533, Schröckh says, that till the middle of the preceding century (the volume is dated, I think, 1805) the church was held together by her symbolical books, but that since that period, their honour has been lost. The middle of the last century is indeed the period, from which most of the German writers date the decided introduction of the Rationalizing principles. There are some excellent remarks by Ernesti, on the obligation of the oath of adherence, in the *Neue Theol. Bibl.* vol. iii. p. 876. Tittman (*Pragmat. Geschichte*, p.

stances to be noticed hereafter produced a strong indisposition to change, and a firm adherence to the

299.) speaks of the adherence to the symbolical books having lasted 200 years, which he seems to date from the Formula Concordiæ. There is a fearful list of works on the subject given by Wegscheider (Institut. Theol. Christ. Dogm. Ed. 4. Halle, 1824, p. 549.) I copy a few. Büsching Untersuchung wenn und durch wen der freyen ev. Lutherischen Kirche die Symbol. Bücher zuerst aufgelegt worden. (Berlin, 1719.) Hufeland Über das Recht Prot. Fürsten, unabänderl. Lehrvorschriften fortzusetzen, (Jena, 1788.) Ammon, in the Theol. Journ. ii. 369. xi. 148. Niemeyer Akadem. Predigten. p. 119. (Halle, 1819.) Briefe an Christl. Religionslehrer, i. 157. Schröter und Klein's Für Christenth. und Gottesgelehr. ii. p. 203. Paulus Sophroniz. iv. 4. p. 35. But there were others, earlier than these, which Wegscheider does not notice, as Töllner's Unterricht über die Symb. Bücher. 1769. Erörterung des besond. Werths der Symb. Büch. 1771. Büsching's Allgem. Anmerkung. über die Symb. Bücher. 1770. Tittman refers for a full account of the writers on the subject, to the Allgemein. Teutsch. Bibl. vol. cxiv. part ii. p. 14.; vol. cxv. part i. p. 1—123. The 24th Chapter of his Pragmatische Geschichte, (p. 295—307.) appears to me to contain a fair summary of the arguments seen in other works on the subject of adherence to the symbolical books. The opponents of subscription urge that when the Confession of Augsburg was drawn up, it was not intended as the confession of faith of a new church, but the defence of a party who did not wish to separate entirely from an old one, and merely objected in this confession to certain errors, and that consequently it is not right to insist on adherence to it. They seek to extend the same defence to the other symbolical writings, though in my opinion, with far less justice. But let us allow full validity to

symbolical books. But they were ill fitted to retain the respect thus paid to them. Their magnitude

the argument ; what is gained by it ? Surely it is not fair to infer, that, because no proper confession of faith was drawn up for the Protestant churches, or rather, because improper ones were used, it is right to have no confession of faith at all ! The other common argument is, that it is contrary to the spirit of Protestantism, to confine men to immutable forms of faith (Tittman, p. 302). Every man certainly may define his own Protestantism as he pleases, but if it is sought to include all Protestantism under such descriptions, *we* must entirely disclaim and deny them. These writers should observe, that according to their own confession, the divines of their own church for above two hundred years were entirely opposed to any such principles, and rightly thought, that no church could exist without fixed declarations of faith (Tittman, p. 299.) The only argument of note besides, is, that as the first reformers only used a due freedom in differing from the mere decrees of synods or individuals, we ought to follow their example. I have noticed this argument in the text below, in the extract from Schröckh. With regard to the actual symbolical books, a common method of speaking of them is, ‘ that in our age, which has examined and decided on the sources and decrees of Christianity so much more accurately, it is clearly seen, that the symbolical books in many points openly oppose the pure doctrines of the Bible’ (Wegscheid. p. 548) ; and it appears, that Schleiermacher points out another way of evading the force of the oath to observe them, by saying, that they are only to be considered so far a rule of faith, as they oppose the corruptions of the Roman church. See Reformation—Almanach ii. p. 376.—Since the first edition of this work was published, I have seen a book called *Die Kirchenordnung der Evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands in ihrem ersten*

was alone a sufficient objection. No human composition of such extent can be expected to command even any considerable degree of assent, when we remember what a vast variety of points of the utmost difficulty it must necessarily embrace, while a declaration of faith for general use should be short and clear, and should contain only great and essential truths. There were indeed other objections to the symbolical writings of the Lutheran Church. They were composed under circumstances of difficulty, of fear, and of danger, which prevented them from being duly studied, and guarded from objections. The consequence was, that when the state of their external controversies allowed the Lutherans to direct their attention to the internal condition of their Church, these faults were strongly felt, and men became unwilling to subscribe to so large a mass of

Jahrhundert (Berlin, 1824), which contains a full account of the ordinations, &c. of the Lutheran Church at her first establishment. I do not observe any notice of the oath, but the candidates were examined as to their knowledge of Scripture and the Confession of Augsburg, and of the points of difference between the Lutheran and other Churches (p. 21): they were asked at their ordination whether they would direct their faith and knowledge by God's word, as proposed in the prophetic and apostolical writings, and as the Church in her symbolical writings recognises it (p. 30, note); and the letters of orders contained a notice that they were free from all errors of sects dissenting from the Confession of Augsburg (p. 31, note).

perhaps doubtful propositions. It is difficult to ~~be~~ certain precisely when the first step was taken to qualify or avoid this subscription, but certainly as early as the time of the Pietists a device was adopted for escaping from the restrictive power of these articles of faith. Ever since that period it has been competent to the ministry to subscribe them with this qualification 'as far as they agree with Scripture *,' a qualification which obviously bestows on the ministry the most perfect liberty of believing and

* From Schröckh, vol. viii. p. 192, and Buddeus Isag. p. 477. it will appear that in Spener's time the device of swearing to the symbolical books 'quatenus cum S. S. concordant' was known, but was disapproved by many; and that Spener himself, though he did not think ill of it, preferred the other form 'quia cum S. S. concordant.' Wegscheider (Instit. Theol. Christ. Dogm. Ed. 4. Halle, 1824, p. 549.) is, therefore, wrong in stating, that Spener was the first deviser of the quatenus. Mr. Pusey, in his late work on German Rationalism, (p. 82, note) says that Spener did not originate, but was called on to decide the much agitated question between the quia and the quatenus. He adds, that 'the two formulæ mutually imply each other,' (which in fact Spener said); 'no conscientious man could subscribe to articles, "as far as they agreed with Holy Scripture," who did not believe that in all essentials they did so agree, &c. &c.' But even in that case it would remain with an interested, though conscientious party, to determine what were essentials, and of course there would be no tie on any but the strictly conscientious. The experience of the last half century is quite conclusive as to the working of such a system.

teaching whatever their own fancy may suggest. Mosheim expressly mentions the indisposition to the symbolical books which had existed long before his time ; and complains that the Lutherans at the end of the seventeenth century * had adopted the Arminian notion that they owed no account of their belief to any human tribunal, and that they had even then degenerated into a state of unbridled licentiousness which held nothing sacred, but with audacious insolence threw down and trod on the most sacred truths of religion †. * A more modern historian of the Ger-

* Professor Sack allows (apud Pusey, p. iii.) that ' Ecclesiastical authorities, in times of an innovating boldness of teaching, did allow the reins to pass from their hands, and occasionally permitted the liberty conceded to their teachers to be unworthily abused.' None of my other opponents have at all denied the truth of my statement; and subsequent inquiries have confirmed its correctness.

On the state of the Reformed Church at this time, see Weisman, pp. 732, 914-5, and most of all his very strong observation, p. 916.

† Mosheim, Cent. xvii. §. 2. part ii. chap. i. Art. 17. So Weisman ii. 1144. *Adsunt quidem in charta formulæ doctrinæ publicæ, ad minimum tanquam regula in docendo futurorum Ecclesiæ Ministrorum. Sed Deus novit, quantum hac in re prævaleat ludibrium, si reliqua considerentur, quæ usum legitimum hujusmodi Symbolorum certatim impugnant, enervant, sæpe etiam ridiculum faciunt.* As to the discipline he says (p. 1145), *Justa et necessaria Ecclesiæ disciplina, si verum fateri volumus, tantum non nulla est, saltem macilenta atque ad summum rei inefficax.* This was in 1745. At least his first edition was

man Churches, in speaking of the same subject, says *, with equal candour, that ‘the evangelical church has not renounced the symbolical books, and would dishonour herself by doing so ; that *conscientious teachers adhere to them as far as their conviction of their truth extends, and where they differ from them in essentials, yet do not publicly oppose them, but do not extend their obligation farther than their clearest unity with Scripture permits.*’

With respect to liturgies, although immediately after the reformation several † were composed, not one was generally received, nor enforced by authority ; and of those different forms which were adopted by different Evangelical states, almost all have long fallen into disuse ‡ from the want of a

1717 ; just before these words he says that he had written certain preceding remarks above twenty years before, and this second edition was published in 1745.

* Schröckh, viii. p. 200.

† I conceive that the best information on this point is to be found in Durel’s View of the Government and Public Worship of the Reformed Churches beyond the Seas. (London, 1662.) He tells us that *all* the churches following the Confession of Augsburg, had set forms of prayer (p. 5) ; and (p. 15) quotes Cappellus (Thes. Salm. Th. de Liturg. part. iii. Thes. vi. and vii.) to the same purpose. Afterwards (p. 16—18.) he shews that such forms were imperative.

‡ I see however, that Bretschneider (über die unkirchlichkeit

church government, which had either the ability or the will to enforce their use, and from the changes of opinion and entire indifference of the clergy themselves.

In the Reformed church, although possibly at first subscription to the various confessions might have been strictly required, a point somewhat doubtful, nothing more has been for a long period demanded of candidates for orders than a promise that they will teach the people according to the holy Scriptures *; a promise which is also very frequently sufficient in the Lutheran church without any refe-

dieser Zeit) speaks of a Liturgy as still used at Gotha, and as improved to suit the new taste in divinity, at least in some degree. The statement in the text is generally true. From Mosheim (Cent. xvi. Sect. 3. part. ii. §. 5.) it will be seen, that the word 'Liturgy' in Germany is applied very often to the regulations existing as to public worship generally, and not in the limited sense. He tells us, that these regulations were not immutable, nor the same in different countries. The Preface to the new Prussian Liturgy states the neglect of all former forms of public prayer, in favour of arbitrary inventions. There is a very strong note against the use or introduction of a liturgy in Wegscheider, p. 550, and in a still more furious extract from the Jena Allgem. Literat. Zeit. for 1816. No. LXXXIV. p. 283.

* The utter and entire futility of subscription to Scripture alone is pointed out by Balguy, Charge V. vol. i. p. 243; and the remarks are more valuable when his opinions are considered.

rence whatever to the symbolical books *. Thus then, as far as any declaration of faith is concerned,

* I beg to be understood as not professing to have *written* authority for these two last assertions; but I have been assured by Germans, on whom I can depend, that this is the case *. The simple oath of teaching according to Scripture, says Wegscheider, was first introduced by the Elector Frederic William into Brandenburg in 1660, and confirmed by Frederic I. king of Prussia, in 1713, a measure, says Wegscheider, 'quod maxime commendandum.' A list of the different Confessions of the Reformed church will be found in Wegscheider, ch. ii. §. 21. with references to other works. Augusti has lately published a collection of the Symbolical works used by different branches of the Reformed church. The Heidelberg Catechism appears to have been the most general. In the territory of the House of Brandenburg the Colloquium Lipsiacum, Declaratio Thoruniensis, and another were established by public authority.—The church of Geneva was looked on as the general model; but there was no public law which compelled the pastors of any reformed church to conform their sentiments to the doctrines taught there. See Mosheim, Cent. xvii. §. 2. part ii. chap. xi. §. 10. As to their essential differences, see Cent. xvi. Sect. 3. part ii. chap. xi. §. 27. From the Confessional, p. 83. and Mosheim, Cent. xvii. Sect. 2. part ii. chap. xi. §. 37, it appears, that subscription has long been given up at Geneva †. In the Pays de Vaud it is still required. See Curtat

* On this point too see Hohenegger's *Beleuchtung der G. von Berzeviczy-schenn Schrift*, &c.

† An ignorance of this fact has misled that powerful writer, Robert Hall. In arguing that Creeds and Articles have no power to restrain differences of opinion, he says, 'we have never heard of the church of Geneva altering its confession, but we know that Voltaire boasted there was not in his time a Cal-

there is no restrictive power whatever in the Protestant churches of Germany.

Lastly, with respect to a Liturgy, although there are forms *appointed* for public prayer, and for the administration of the sacraments, in some, and perhaps all the Reformed churches, yet these forms were not imperative, but might be, and, I believe, have always latterly been dispensed with, at the pleasure of

Nouvelles Ob. sur les Conventicles, p. 81. Through Switzerland and France the reformed church uses Liturgies *.

vinist in the city.' It has not altered its confession, but removed the necessity or subscribing it—and this appeal to a fact, which is not in his favour, certainly strengthens our argument. I could wish to see one or two pages blotted out of that part of Mr. Hall's work as unworthy of him. He is quite contradicted by facts, where he says, that 'the Articles of the national church are almost effaced from the minds of its members, because they have long been *neglected or denied* by the majority of those who occupy its pulpits.' When prejudice seizes little minds, it is on its own ground. Its triumph over learning, genius, and eloquence, is always lamentable. (Hall's Reviews, &c. p. 65.)

* The following information is taken from 'Some Account of the Reformed Church in France,' London, 1819, p. 261, 262. 'The doctrine and manner of worship of the French reformed church is somewhat similar to that of the English Presbyterians. Two hundred and thirty of their churches have Pastors. These are formed into eighty-nine Consistories, who manage their external concerns. A Consistory is generally composed of three or four Ministers and the Deacons and Officers of three or four neighbouring churches. The service commences by reading the Scriptures by a regular reader, who is not usually ordained. The Commandments are then distinctly pronounced. Then the Minister in a fervent manner reads a prayer from the Geneva Liturgy. The congregation then sing a Psalm. The Minister prays extempore and preaches. He then reads another prayer, the congregation sing a hymn of praise, and are dismissed with the Minister's benediction.' It appears, from various sources, that the Genevan Liturgy is, on the whole, most highly thought of. Among the Waldenses, the Minister uses the Liturgy of the Swiss University, at which he has been brought up.

the minister. Public prayer was thus left to the fancy, the enthusiasm, or the carelessness of individual teachers; and as the people could not expect any consistency from them in doctrines which they heard from their pulpits, so neither could they hope to be led in their addresses to the throne of grace, always to pray for those great aids which human infirmity always requires. Sometimes they would be carried away into fanaticism, sometimes lost in indifference.

With respect to Church Government, it can be useful in preventing aberrations in points of faith only when free from these stains itself. But when there is no binding power in Confessions of faith, it would be absurd to suppose that the members of the executive are more free from the taint than those whom they are appointed to govern *. Even under happier circumstances, the constitution of the Protestant churches was little calculated to restrain any tendency to changes of opinion and of faith. The reformed church, for example, did not in fact profess to be one body, and as Mosheim has observed †, its

* So says Wegscheider (p. 548.) ‘Nec minus Ecclesiarum proceres, qui Religionis doctores inaugurandos libris symbolicis obstringunt, ejusmodi fidem cæcam *quam ipsi aspernantur*, illis injungere possunt.’

† See Mosheim, Cent. xvi. § 3. Part II. chap. ii. where its constitution is described. In the new union of the pro-

branches were not united either by the same system of government, doctrine, or public worship; it never required from its ministers uniformity of private opinion *, nor (in fact) in public teaching, but always fessions, a different form has been thought of. There is, or is to be, a sort of representation of the church, consisting of both clerical and lay members, 'ita,' says Wegscheider, (p. 543.) 'ut per singulos singulorum coetuum socios *Presbyteria* constituentur, præter verbi divini ministros viros aliquot sapientia Christiana insignes, a reliquis ejusdem cœtus sodalibus eligendos, complectentia, atque *Synodi* subinde convocentur non solum clericorum et theologorum doctissimorum, sed etiam laicorum, qui dicuntur, a presbyteriis delegandorum, qui de salute ecclesiæ consulant.' From these synods, finally, are to be constituted ecclesiastical colleges of clerks and laymen, who are to deliberate on ecclesiastical matters as *reason is more cultivated*, and the *right use* of Scripture more understood, submitting their decrees to the approbation of the sovereign. There has been a vast mass of publications on the subject of course. Among others, see Entwurf der Synodal Ordnung f. den Kirchenverein beider Evang. Confessionen in Preuss. Staate, 1817. Schleiermacher, Ueber die für die Prot. Kirche des Preuss. Staats einzurichtende Synodalverfassung, Berl. 1817. Bretschneider Dogmatik. ii. p. 811. Bülow Ueber die gegenwärt. Verhältnisse d. Christl. Ev. Kirchenwesens in Deutschl. bes. in bezieh. auf. d. Preuss. Staat. (Magdeb. 1818.) p. 126.

* Weisman (ii. p. 916.) repeats the same statement in yet stronger terms. He shews that the reformed churches were *never* bound in any strong union, and that political circumstances prevented it; and he adds, that the tie is yet weaker in modern times—that there is *no common confession*—that each has its own, which, *in the modern fashion*, 'plus est in charta, quam

allowed them to explain doctrines of no little moment according to their private sentiments, so that it is in fact an ecclesiastical body composed of many churches which actually vary, and may ever continue to introduce fresh variations in their doctrines.

I have already stated, on Mosheim's authority, the deplorable condition of the Lutheran church in his time. The picture of the Reformed church at the same period, presented by an equally competent authority, is most striking. Weisman * says, that from about the beginning of the eighteenth century, it became useless to say a word on any minor controversies or on the abuse of reason in matters of faith; and that there was an absolute torrent, or rather deluge, of Pseudo-Rationalism, which, in various forms, poured in on all the Reformed universities and churches, so that a divine who ventured to say a word against the partly crude and partly mischievous systems of the day, was held up to ridicule. The moderns, he adds, do not at all deny that on these points they differ from their ancestors and their old doctrines; but, on the contrary, hold them all in contempt.

in observantia'—that these churches profess unbounded liberty, and even in grave matters profess contrary opinions without scruple.

* II. p. 732.

But this statement, although sufficient to show that the German Churches have nothing in their constitution to check changes of doctrine, is not all. These churches boast of it as their very highest privilege, and the very essence of a Protestant church that its opinions should constantly change. Hear the words of the most esteemed among their modern historians *. ‘Our divines recognize the necessity of enquiring, of correcting, and of ameliorating their belief *as often as any new views require it*; and they do not deny the possibility of making that belief more free from false explanations and arbitrary adjuncts, firmer in some parts, and more connected in all †.’ I am not here using an accidental or careless declaration, but one, the spirit of which runs through every work of the rationalizing German divines ‡. It is a declaration which, if it refers to

* See Schröckh, viii. p. 187. Book III. Div. 4. Part iii.

† I have been charged with misrepresenting Schröckh; but I repeat the quotation, as I have sufficiently vindicated myself from the accusation. See my reply to Bretschneider.

‡ This declaration cannot be more offensively made than in the Preface to Wegscheider’s *Institutiones Theol. Christ. Dogm.* in the edition of 1815, and indeed in the 4th edition also. Griesbach (*Anleitung Zum Studium der Dogmatik*. §. 84.) says, that symbolical books are not to endure for ever, but that it is enough if divines follow the *newest* and best views. See Tittman’s *Pragmatische Geschichte*, pp. 26, and following, for some very strong assertions. In Döderlein’s *Opuscula Theologica* (Jena,

matters of trifling importance, is deserving only of contempt, but if it applies to fundamentals, must inspire us with the greatest horror and disgust *. We cannot, in that case, doubt for a moment that this is one of the outrageous attempts of reason to subject religion entirely to her decision; we cannot be blind to the obvious fact that if such a principle were recognised, every new school of philosophy would produce a revolution of religious opinion, and mould all belief according to its own views and principles, and that thus there would be nothing fixed or stable in religion while the world lasted †. Such

1789,) there is a tract (p. 161.) called *De mutatione religionis publicæ*, in which, though professedly very moderate, the right of constant changes of religion (especially by explaining away and removing doctrines not fit for the times) is strongly asserted, and supported by a great deal of feeble and sophistical argument. A system of fraud in hiding their intentions from the people is virtually recommended to the innovators; and Döderlein has the audacity to defend this by the examples of St. Paul and our Lord himself. What Jesus said of the new doctrine having been in fact at the bottom of the Jewish system, was merely to soften Jewish prejudices!

* See Tertullian's authority against this method as quoted by Bishop Kaye, p. 586.

† How sensible is Waterland's language on this point! 'Reformation is good, when reformation is wanting, but to be always reforming, is no reforming at all; it is behaving like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. All errors of any

views could not be held for a moment by those who had any belief in the divine origin of our religion, or any confidence in God's promise, that he would always be with his church to the end of the world. In what sense indeed can such a promise be understood by one who supposes that for eighteen hundred years God has entirely concealed the truth which he promised to teach, and that he may continue to do so for an indefinite period? If then it be essential to a Protestant church * to possess a constant power of varying her belief, let us remember that ours is assuredly no Protestant church. The dispute is not here whether we be right or wrong in our doctrines, but the principle on which we separated from the Roman church, was, not that we had discovered any new † views of Scripture doctrines, but that we desired to return to the primitive confession, and the views held by the

moment have been purged off long ago by the care of our Reformers, and why are we then still reforming? Physic may be proper at certain seasons; but to pretend to live constantly upon it, instead of food, is a certain way to impair, and in a little time to destroy, the best and soundest constitution in the world.'—Waterland's Remarks on Dr. Clarke's Exposition. (Works, vol. v. p. 430.

* See Wegscheider, p. 73.

† This is exactly what the King of Prussia says of Luther in his letter to the Duchess of Anhalt Cothen in 1826. (Published at Berlin by Krause.)

apostles and early fathers of the church *. As the founders of our church firmly and hopefully believed that God had led them by his Spirit into these views of truth, so they as firmly and hopefully believed that he would continue and strengthen the church in them to the end. With these feelings they have given us a declaration of faith, without subscription to which, thank God, no one can be a teacher in the church; and if he afterwards depart from it, he must depart also from communion with the church which holds it, and not disturb our peace by inculcating what his fancy dictates as a more excellent way. Here then is a marked difference between our own and these Protestant churches. Our church receives only what was received in those ages when truth must have been known; the others profess that perhaps in no age has truth yet been recognised, and that her genuine form may still remain to discover. But as it is obvious that churches holding such principles can have no belief in God's guidance, let us descend from this high position, and try whether this perpetual change of opinion be justifiable on reasonable grounds. One main object of the *reception* of especial points of faith, is the amelio-


* 'There is no greater absurdity stirring this day in Christendom, than that the reformation of an old corrupted church, will we, nill we, must be taken for the building of a new.' Laud's Preface to his Conference with Fisher.

ration of the moral being of man through their influence ; the stronger the belief then, the stronger must be its influence on the practice. But what strength of belief can exist under such a state of things ? If a religion can have existed for so many centuries without being understood, if the very principle on which we admit any belief or view regarding it, is, that that view may be entirely wrong, and that men may not yet have penetrated the thick veil in which this religion has enveloped the truths it professes to teach, can we hold a belief which we receive only for the time, with any strength or confidence ? Can it have any influence on our practice, or can the religion itself now or at any future time be of the slightest value ? If it be asked of us whether we presume to assert our own infallibility, we may justly answer that *certainly*, speaking in the abstract sense of the word, may not belong to man, but that we possess such a certainty as excludes doubt, as leaves us no room, and no tendency to question ; and that such a certainty is at once necessary and sufficient to influence our practice ; while if we admit the great probability of our belief being wrong, that belief can have no strong hold on us, nor be any thing more than a mere indifferent assent to a doubtful probability. How can we fix on our minds to-day what to-morrow may teach us to reject ? But yet farther, how can we teach others what we so doubtfully receive ourselves ?

How can we offer to their notice any thing but a cold system of moral truth, resting on no higher ground than its expediency? Can we teach the repentant sinner to look for comfort to the cross of a dying Saviour, or to the mediation of that Saviour glorified, when these doctrines of redemption and intercession may be mere speculative fancies? Can we teach him in his infirmities to rely for help on the ever-present Spirit, when we know not so much as whether there be any Holy Spirit? Can we point the troubled look of suffering, of age, and of infirmity, to the resurrection of Jesus, as a certain token that they are themselves to be one day the inhabitants of a brighter and a better country, when we doubt whether the very narration of the resurrection may not be a mere imposture and fabrication? If this be Protestantism, if it be Protestantism to doubt of every sacred truth, or at least to receive none with confidence, may that gracious Providence which has ever yet preserved our church, preserve her still from the curse of Protestantism; may it teach her that He who has given her Scripture as a guide, has given her also the power of understanding the truths it contains, that she has not been in past times, that she is not now left to wander in uncertainty and error, but possesses a light which will guide her to truth and to peace*.

* It will be evident that the concluding arguments are ad-

dressed to those among ourselves, who may be inclined to doubt the propriety of the church's holding unalterable opinions. They have no force against the German Rationalists, who have long accepted the conclusions to which these arguments point, as likely to follow from their method of proceeding; that is to say, who have long relinquished all belief in the divine origin of Christianity (in the proper sense of the word) and of all its positive and peculiar doctrines.



CHAPTER III.

IN the last chapter I gave a brief view of the constitution of the Protestant churches in Germany, in order to exhibit their entire deficiency in any controul over even the wildest spirit of religious speculations. Before I proceed to notice the changes and corruptions in doctrine which that deficiency has enabled the restlessness and vanity of a fancied philosophy to effect, it will be necessary to premise a remark, which may in some degree explain the operations of that philosophy, and to add to it a very brief review of the preceding history of the German churches.

If Christianity be any thing more than a name, if there be any thing like truth in the view we are accustomed to take of the divinity of its origin, of the intentions of its Founder with respect to mankind, and of the manner in which he provided for its progress, one conclusion is entirely irresistible. It is this, that the great truths which form the foundations of the Christian system, that is to say, the respective

relations between God, the Mediator, and the world he came to save, in their preceding and future bearings must have been clearly and fully laid down, as far as they were ever to be known *under that revelation*, at its very commencement. The supposition, that they were so obscurely or so imperfectly explained by God to the first propagators of Christianity, as either to be entirely misunderstood, or not understood at all, is (on the hypothesis of a Divine revelation) too absurd to admit of examination. Nor can it be said that these early teachers of our religion, presented to those whom they were appointed to bring up in the faith of Christ, a different view of that faith from that which they possessed themselves, without bringing an accusation of duplicity against them for which we have no authority in their character, and for which we can assign no sufficient reason. That God indeed might not communicate to the apostles a full view of his mysterious counsels; nay, farther, that of those mysterious counsels no human being in this low and limited state can ever hope to have a full or satisfactory view is most true; but that is not the question. We only maintain that it would be absurd to suppose that the first and Divinely-assisted teachers of a Divine revelation would not have at least as full a view of it as the unassisted mind of man could enjoy, that is to say, at least as full a view as any future disciples could hope to

attain. If then the doctrines of Christianity were clearly laid down at its commencement, and if we have any reason to suppose that they were afterwards sullied and polluted by human inventions, there would seem to be only one method of ascertaining the justice of our suspicions, and of attempting the restoration of the doctrines to their native and genuine form *. If the stream has contracted impurities in its course, we must recur to the fountain head for pure and unsullied water. We must recur for truth and light, first to Scripture, and then, if difficulties or doubts occur as to its interpretation, to those Christian writers who lived at the outset of the Christian system. They knew what was taught by the living voice of the Apostles, they knew, therefore, what is taught in that Scripture wherein the Apostles, though dead, yet speak with a living voice, and their writings are thus a precious record of Christian truth. We may, and we must for obvious reasons examine their works † with the most scrupulous

* Hall has expressed the idea which runs through this passage with some beauty. ‘Withal, it must be granted that the first ages were the purest; as the water which first rises from the spring, is clearer than that which, by a long decursion, hath mixed itself with the soil of the channel.’ *Episcopacy by Divine Right*. Part. i. Sect. 5.

† On this point see Bishop Van Mildert’s fourth Bampton Lecture. I would in fact recommend the whole of that excellent volume to the perusal of the student in Divinity.

caution, and we must ever reject the belief that their traditions or any others are to be a supplement to Scripture; but where the result of such a careful examination is, that these great witnesses agree in handing down to posterity any point of doctrine as apostolic truth, I am at a loss to conceive what higher evidence can be demanded to show that it is a part and portion of Christianity.

This then is the state of things, on the hypothesis of a Divine revelation; truth was as clearly revealed at the outset of Christianity, as it was ever intended to be known; its record is in Scripture; and if doubt as to the meaning of Scripture with respect to doctrine occurs, we can appeal to witnesses, competent from the time when they lived, and the knowledge they must have enjoyed, to remove those doubts entirely*. Where then is earthly philosophy? It is excluded! There is no scope under such a system for its discoveries or inventions, no room for its theories, no arena for its genius. It must either stoop to explain, to illustrate, and to defend a system on which its own name is not inscribed, and in which its own triumphs are not recorded, or it must reject that system altogether. Any examination of the writings of the modern theologians

* See Bishop Van Mildert's *Life of Waterland*, p. 124, 125; and Waterland's own work there referred to.

of Germany, will, I think, show beyond all doubt that this is in fact the explanation of the progress of things there, and of the rejection of Christianity by those who have assumed to themselves the character of the modern reformers of Germany, and have professed most falsely to walk in the same steps as the early reformers, and to complete what they begun. These reformers, indefensible as they * might be in minor points, indulged in no such criminal dreams or intentions. They entertained, for example, the most reasonable belief as to the value and authority of the early Christian writers, as proofs and witnesses of the doctrines promulgated in early times. As the Romish Church alleged in justification of her opinions the words of Scripture, and the authority of the ancient writers, the reformers, so far from denying the value of those writers, constantly (even in their symbolical writings) appeal to them in proof of the correctness of their own views. It is indeed their boast that they maintain no article of faith which had not been equally maintained by the pri-

* 'Luther was a man of vehement spirit; and very often what he took in hand, he did not do it, but over do it. He that will justify all his speeches, especially such as he wrote in heat of opposition, I believe will have work enough.' Chillingworth, chap. vi. § 73. 'That some among them (the early Protestants) were peevish and ignorantly zealous, is neither to be doubted, nor is there danger in confessing it.' Laud's Conference, § 21. 3.

mitive Church *; and that they rejected none, which she recognized. The concluding assertion of the confession of Augsburg is, that in the sum of the doctrines there exhibited, there is not a single article at variance with Scripture, with the Catholic Church, or with the Romish Church itself as far as it was known from its writers. The apology for the confession abounds in similar assertions, and in appeals to the early fathers †; and even states that the

* ‘The first reformers, both here and abroad, proceeded like wise men, reducing religion, as near as could well be, to its pure and primitive state; they went by rule, and so knew when they had done enough. There is an absolute necessity of fixing a certain rule, to prevent the endless excursions of flight and fancy. That rule is *Scripture*, but taking *antiquity* along with it as the best comment upon it. It was wise and excellent advice given in one of our Canons in the reign of Queen Elizabeth in 1571. “Imprimis vero videbunt (Concionatores) ne quid unquam doceant pro concione quod a populo religiose teneri et credi velint nisi quod consentaneum sit doctrinæ Veteris aut Novi Testamenti, quodque ex illa ipsa doctrina Catholici Patres et veteres Episcopi collegerunt.” Sparrow’s Collect. p. 238.’ Waterland’s Remarks on Dr. Clarke’s Exposition, Works, vol. v. p. 429.

† Jewell’s Apology abounds in similar appeals. ‘Nos Christi, et Apostolorum, et Sanctorum patrum primitivam Ecclesiam, semper judicavimus esse Catholicam.’ Enchir. Theol. vol. i. p. 149. In Latimer’s seventh Sermon before King Edward VI. he says, in speaking of Origen, ‘These Doctors, we have great cause to thank God for them, but yet I would not have them always to be allowed. They have handled many points

preachers of the new profession appealed to the same testimony, as well as to Scripture, in their public discourses *. They took their faith in short as they found it exhibited in these writings down to the fourth and fifth centuries ; and presumed not to question or examine its correctness, because the light of Christianity must have burned brightest at its commencement, and its doctrines must then have been most fully developed and understood. It is this very circumstance which has been made a subject of reproach against the early reformers by the modern school of theology. With the readiness to suspect evil, which is a never-failing attendant on that grovelling philosophy, many of them do not hesitate to express their doubts as to the sincerity of the founders of their Church on this point ; and all accuse them of having thus done much less than they ought and might for the cause of Christian theology †. On

of our faith very godly, and we may have a great stay in them ; *in many things we might not well lack them*, but yet I would not have men to be sworn to them, and so addicted as to take hand over head whatsoever they say ; it were a great inconvenience so to do.'

* See Apol. Confess. Aug. pp. 59. 79. 158. in Tittman's edition.

† See Tittman's *Pragmatische Geschichte*, pp. 49—62. In the *Halle Literatur Zeitung* for 1819, quoted in Hohenegger's *Zeiche der Zeit*, p. 36. Luther is said to have attended more to the letter than the spirit of Scripture, &c.

this basis however their confessions of faith were drawn up; and a feeling of respect for those Confessions endured and even perhaps increased in force for nearly a century. Indeed there would have been no opportunity, if there had been the inclination, to examine into the justness of the opinions held by the early Church. For the controversies with the Romanists, and some among themselves, directed the attention of the Protestants to points in which they differed from others, not to those in which all agreed. During this period then, the divines of Germany remained true to the belief of their Churches; or, according to the phrase of the innovators, this was the first period of that slumber of theology * which was not entirely broken for nearly another century. One of this school is pleased indeed to denominate the whole even of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century, the age of theological barbarism; an age, be it remembered, which produced in the Lutheran Church alone, Calov, Schmidt, Hackspan, Walther, Glass, the Carpzoffs, and others, as many and as great writers as any Church can boast in an equal space of time; writers, whose merits are proved by the fact, that their works are, and ever will be in the

* See Borger de Mysticismo, p. 43. He should have known better; but there is a tendency to rationalism all through his work.

hands of the theological student *. The general statements of the innovators amount to this, that the divines of the age of which we speak, had neither the inclination nor the power to do any thing but fortify their own systems which were dogmatical, and that they did not search out truth for themselves from Scripture—that theology as a science was left from the epoch of the Reformation as it had been received from the schoolmen—that the interpretation of the Bible was made the slave, not the mistress of dogmatical theology, as it ought to be—that the criticism of the Bible was wholly neglected—that the text was so corrupt as to mislead perpetually, and that indeed down to the eighteenth century, even by Stephens, Beza, and Erasmus, nothing whatever had been done to give us the Bible in its genuine state, and that appeals were made only to the writings of the fathers, whose ignorance, prejudices, and want of philosophical illumination, deprived their evidence and opinions of all value †. Passing over the exag-

* Mr. Pusey (p. 35.) allows the learning of these writers, but accuses them of ‘a want of scientific spirit, of freedom from prejudice, of comprehensive and discriminating views.’ I confess my inability to discover these defects in a large portion of the writers to whom I refer; and the high estimation in which many of their works are yet held, seems to me to be a sufficient reply to the charge.

† See Tittman’s *Pragmatische Geschichte*, p. 72, and follow-

generations in this statement on some points, that is to say, allowing, which is very far from the truth, that the scholastic theology was deserving of all the abuse heaped on it, and that it was too fondly retained; allowing to the innovators, if they please, that no one could either criticise or interpret * the Bible till the happy period when they arose, their complaint of the total want of advancement in theology, during this period, means, it is obvious, nothing more than that there existed no mania for discovery and change, and that no restless spirits thirsted to destroy the system

ing, for proof of these assertions. The reader who wishes to pursue this part of the subject should refer to Mr. Pusey's 'Historical Enquiry,' &c. where he will find these views of the modern German divines fully stated and maintained by that gentleman. I venture to refer also to my own 'Letter to the Bishop of London' in defence of the earlier theologians of Protestant Germany. Buddeus's *Isagoge*, as I have stated in that letter, will supply to those who have not time to read extensively for themselves very tolerable materials for forming a correct judgment.

* Of course it is not denied that there was much absurd interpretation then as there is at all times; but the disease generally found a remedy at the time. Thus for example, as Ernesti has observed, when Dannhauer introduced a mere metaphysical explanation of the difference in Micah and Matt. ii. 6. he was corrected by Hackspan, (*Misc. Sacr.* p. 36.) who observed, that it was losing labour and acting absurdly, to demand from grammarians a metaphysical subtlety never conceded to them. (Ernesti's *Tract on the Folly of Philosophical Interpretation* in his *Opuscula*.)

already established, and introduce another (not improved merely by proceeding on the principles of the first reformers but) founded on views and principles entirely novel. The writings of these divines may occasionally be wearisome and uninteresting, because they were, from necessity, often occupied in controversies, the grounds and reasonings on which are familiar to the theological student. But the accusation of ignorance and idleness brought against them, is entirely false. They possessed in very many instances, as I have just stated, the most extensive learning; they were useful in their time and vocation, and little merit the reproaches of limited views and want of professional knowledge, because they did not attempt to shake that fabric which they firmly believed to rest on the basis of Scripture. We may judge of them in some degree from the writings of one of this respectable school, Calixtus *, who was professor in the university of Helmstadt, and whose earnest desire to promote, if not an union, at least a spirit of charity between the two Protestant churches, was in a great measure the

* I think it perfectly fair to appeal to Calixtus, as a specimen of the age in which he lived. Although he was attacked, for a particular reason, by a large body of his contemporaries, his education was exactly the same as theirs, and I do not see any difference between him and them, except in his more earnest and amiable desire to avoid the bitterness of controversy.

cause of what was called the Syncretistic controversy*—and I shall advert to one of his works, merely as showing what was the real state of theology in his time, and as proving the entire falsehood of one of the pretexts of which the modern school has made use, in order to justify the striking into a new and different path of study and thought. In a posthumous work of this great writer †, there are directions to the theological student, which give no indications of a slumber of theology, but which would do honour to the divines of any age and country. He lays down no narrow bounds for the student, he binds him to no sterile course of dialectics, although he does justice to the profound thought and acuteness of the schoolmen, but shows that on the one hand the deepest and most extensive knowledge of the languages, not merely of Scripture, but of all the early versions of it; and that on the other, the widest, if not the deepest acquaintance with the round of sciences, should enter into the character of the accomplished divine. He requires (notwithstanding the false assertions to be met with in the modern divines as to the neglect of history among their pre-

* See Henke iv. 127—144. Walch's *Religionsstreitigkeiten in der Luth. Kirche*, part i. p. 219. Mosheim, however, is sufficient on this subject.

† Apparatus s. *Introductio ad Studium Theologiæ* Helmstadt, 1650.

decessors) the fullest knowledge of history in general, and in particular, of ecclesiastical history. He lays down the soundest rules for the interpretation of Scripture, and on the subject of our present enquiry displays the most enlightened views. 'No Church,' he says, 'can be required to receive doctrines which have sprung up within four or five centuries, while every Church, which deserves the name, must receive whatever was received by the pure and primitive ages; that is to say, it must receive Scripture, the doctrines of the apostles, as exhibited in the creeds, the confessions of the synods of Ephesus and Chalcedon, and whatever was considered as necessary to salvation by the doctors of the ancient Church; it must receive what they received, and condemn what they condemned.' These are views worthy of the most enlightened theologian, and it would have been happy for the Church and country to which he belonged, had they followed the path which he pointed out. But if we look to the writings of many of the contemporaries of Calixtus, we shall find opinions just as reasonable, and views just as comprehensive. Let us turn for example, if we wish to understand the principles of interpretation of the seventeenth century, to the writings of Calov, one of the Divines of this period who has been the most violently assailed and calumniated. I should find difficulty nevertheless in pointing out any writer of any

period who lays down more just principles of interpretation. He says that the mystical sense is to be rejected, and the literal followed; that in order to comprehend the sacred writers we must study the style and phraseology of each and of all with diligence; that we must depend on the strictest grammatical investigation, and on a general view of the whole context, to determine the sense of the passage; that we must be well acquainted with the history, chronology, and geography of the times in which the writers lived, to study them with advantage; and that, finally, as Scripture comes from God, and a real knowledge of it must come from him too, we must have recourse to prayer, to pious meditation, and, as St. Augustine says, to a pure and holy life, if we wish to have the power of interpreting Scripture*.

Many years after the death of Calixtus had not elapsed ere the want of a sufficient controuling power in the German Church began to display itself in the formation of a variety of opinions. There were some who were wearied with the violent and endless controversies, not only between the Catholic and Protestant Churches, but between the two great members of the latter denomination;

* See the Preface to his 'Biblia Veteris Testamenti illustrata.'

controversies which undoubtedly wasted the time and embittered the spirits of all engaged in them, prevented them from directing their attention to worthier objects, and too often destroyed all the holy feelings of Christian charity *. In opposition to this, there arose first, not indeed a distinct sect separating from either of the Churches, nor professing different tenets on the great points of faith, but a party within the Church, distinguished by the name of *Pietists*, whose aim it was to show that Christianity consisted in virtue only, and not in subtlety of research or argument; and who desired to address themselves not to the head, but to the heart †. Right in their feelings and intentions, they were often erroneous in the way in which they allowed those feelings to operate. *Spener* who was the founder of this school, was anxious not only to exhibit a dogmatical system, which being expressed in the words of Scripture alone, would, he imagined, tend to the furthering of religion in the heart, instead of exciting controversy; but he established it as his grand position that only a converted or regenerated theologian could attain any true knowledge of his science ‡—that any others

* A sufficient account of all these disputes will be found in Mosheim.

† See Schröckh, viii. p. 20.

‡ See Stäudlin's *Geschichte der Christl. Moral*, p. 343, and following. The same writer in the *Geschichte der Rationalismus*

possessed merely a sort of philosophy with regard to divinity—and that the great impediment to the study was its being considered as an human acquirement, and not as a gift sent by God to each individual, and a light leading to blessedness. Doctrines like these he was in the habit of enforcing, at private meetings of the students of his own university, where Scripture was read and discussed on similar principles; and then these meetings, which were known

und Supernaturalismus, p. 83, says truly that Spener did not here allude to the elementary knowledge of theology; nor did he mean that theological learning was unnecessary, but that only such a theologian as he spoke of, could have a pure, deep, spiritual, comprehensive, living and active knowledge. But it is perfectly clear that this doctrine, however true and important, was exceedingly liable to perversion, and that it was actually perverted by some of his followers. I appeal to the mystical writings of the school in proof of my assertion; and I beg to refer to Mr. Pusey's work (p. 100—105.) where he has shewn the evils which attended on Pietism. Professor Thurlock has dwelt at yet greater length on the fanaticism connected with Pietism. See the report of his lectures in the New York Biblical Repertory for January 1828, p. 43—49. It may be observed, that if the divines of Spener's time spoke and acted harshly towards him and his followers, it is a little hard to impute every possible evil feeling to them, without careful investigation, without enquiring whether there was not much want of judgment shewn in the method in which right principles were inculcated, and whether Spener did not in fact often do injustice to his opponents by charging them with denying principles which they held as firmly and sincerely as he did.

by the name of *Collegia Pietatis* *, were extended to other universities, where the students frequently

* I think it most candid to give the opinion entertained of these Collegia Pietatis by a person differing from myself. "Spener's widest influence, however, was derived from the institution of the much-questioned 'Collegia Pietatis.' The object of these at their first commencement, was to expand, explain, and apply the discourse of the preceding Sunday. He had felt, in common probably with every practical minister, the inadequacy of any instruction in which the people were mere recipients, either in imparting religious knowledge, or in giving an individual effect to what was delivered generally. In these meetings, which were commenced with prayer, part of the sermon was repeated, questions were asked by Spener to ascertain how far it had been understood, or proposed to him by any of the men present, not to satisfy curiosity, but to promote practical piety. These meetings continued to be conducted upon the same principles, when a passage of Scripture was laid as the basis instead of the sermon. The free communication and the knowledge of the wants of the congregation re-acted upon the usefulness of the pulpit. These meetings were approved of by his colleagues, were in conformity with the symbolical books, praised by the universities, and consulted even by Ben. Carpzov, who was subsequently, from envy, the great enemy of Spener.".... "The example thus given speedily spread; similar meetings were instituted in other places, as Essen, Augsburg, Schweinfurt, Giessen, &c.; and though, in the place of their original institution, misrepresentation diminished their influence, in others they may have been inconsiderately introduced, and were forbidden, yet they continued long a blessing to the church, and were the means of recalling many, even of the learned, from the inventions and disputes of the schools, to the basis of a more fruitful theology, in

held them without the knowledge of their superiors,

piety and the study of the Scriptures. On these were also founded the Collegia Biblica, which formed part of the widely-felt utility of the University of Halle.”—

“ His (Spener’s) immediate followers carried on practically the improvements whose theory he had given, and through the erection of the university of Halle obtained an extensive and influential field of action.”—

“ The free circulation of talent or merit, which has ever taken place through every part of Germany, independent of the accident of the spot of its first formation, gave more importance to the new institution, than would, perhaps, in this country be generally conceived. Halle became, like Geneva of old, the heart from which the impulse of the new principles became felt in every part of the system. In the first thirty years of its institution, 6034 theologians had been admitted into it, besides the thousands which were educated at the numerous schools supported in the Orphan-House founded by Francke. An institution, which collaterally perfected, by the opportunities which it afforded for catechetical instruction, the practical character of the ministers educated at Halle. The usefulness of these preparations was further promoted by the establishment of Kanstein, a disciple of Spener, for the printing of Bibles, (by which much more than two millions of Bibles, and a million of Testaments, have been circulated), and that for the printing of Christian writings and for the cheaper sale of books of education.”—

“ The influence of this system was, for a time, felt not in Germany alone, but in Denmark, in Sweden, even in Greece, in mount Athos; teachers of youth, and ministers were sought from Halle, in every part of Germany; others were kindled by their example, and the plans of benevolence as well as the piety of Halle were extended in the places whither they were invited. The bodies, thus organized, long continued to exist, and indeed

and even the people were sometimes admitted *. In their praiseworthy eagerness to lead men to a more animating and Christian system of morality than had been delivered during the period of controversy, many of the Pietists certainly undervalued human acquirements—they forgot that a church, militant on earth, requires teachers who are able to defend the faith, as well as teach it; and that it is far more useful to possess the power of explaining the true sense of Scripture, than to be scrupulous in using

never wholly lost their influence, though the master-movement, which had first given them impulse, slackened, and in great measure ceased, with the death of Francke, and the first founders of the school.'—Pusey's *Historical Enquiry*, pp. 75—77. I would beg the reader to refer to Weisman's excellent remarks on the subject in his second vol. pp. 1040—1043 (2d ed.)

* I have taken these particulars chiefly from Schröckh; but the reader will find a connected view of Spener and the Pietists in Staüdlin *ubi supra*, pp. 332—366. There are some very valuable remarks on the Pietistic controversy in Weisman II. pp. 1023—1040. There is a *Life of Spener* by Canstein, published at Halle in 1740. He was born in 1635, called to Frankfort in 1666, and began to hold his religious assemblies in 1670. The students of Leipsic, who held similar ones, were ordered to leave the university. They went to Halle, where they made many religious establishments. Francke founded an orphan asylum, and Baron Canstein a printing-house for Bibles. These still subsist. I have seen a statement that the *Collegia Pietatis* also still subsist at Frankfort. See *Archives du Christianisme* for December 1825, p. 540.

its bare words in the statement of a dogmatical system. It is necessary however to bear in mind these opinions of the Pietists, because their grand tenet that every thing not immediately connected with the practice of Christian virtue is useless, had beyond all doubt a great influence in forming the character of Semler, who was a member of the *Collegia Pietatis*, to whose charge a great portion of the evil now felt in the German churches is to be attributed, and to whose character and writings we shall presently come.

When the effervescence with respect to Pietism had subsided, the divines of Germany began to look beyond their own immediate churches. The writings of the Socinians * and the Remonstrants †, those of

* Staüdlin observes, that the Socinians were *not* Rationalists, i. e. they professed to accept *a revelation*, and only rejected certain doctrines as not being biblical. *Gesch. der Rat^s. und Sup^s.* p. 95. He calls them Supernatural Rationalists.

† ‘The Remonstrants, at least the earlier ones, endeavoured to unite all religious parties by exhortations to lay aside all the mysterious and positive doctrines of Christianity, as matters on which each man might think as he pleased, while the moral doctrines on which all were agreed were to be considered as the most important.’ Staüdlin *Gesch. der Rat^s. und Sup^s.* p. 98. Episcopus especially urged that Christianity was wholly practical; that the Christian had little to believe but much to do; that all needful for happiness must be found in the New Testament, yet that all

the English Deists *, who led the way (and it is a

which is there need not be believed ; that accurate belief of mysterious doctrines would be rather hurtful than profitable ; that it is not necessary to believe that Christ is the Son of God in the highest sense, &c.

* After the publication of the first edition of this work, I observed the following sentence in the *North American Review* for July 1824, vol. x. p. 117. 'It is the English Infidel writers, moreover, who laid the foundation not only for the school of their successors in France, but for the modern German Divinity, which in any common acceptation of terms, is another form of infidelity. The first lines of that scheme which was imperfectly shadowed out by Semler, and has been filled up by Eichhorn and his followers, and which, with much variety in details, insists on denying any thing supernatural to belong to Christianity, may be very clearly traced in the works of Toland and Collins.' I should be inclined to think that Mr. Everett, who spent some time at Göttingen, was the author of this article.

'The attack upon Christianity,' says Mr. Pusey, 'had been carried on more systematically * in our own, than in any other country ; the necessity of a revelation, as well as the validity of the several evidences for its truth had been successively disputed by men, some of

* 'There is scarcely a point in the whole compass of Christianity or of Christian evidence which was not, in a regular progression, sifted by the English Deists. Herbert, by substituting a natural theology for revealed doctrine, and by assigning man's natural instinct as the source of his knowledge of truth, the universality of the reception of those truths as the test of their being thus derived, laid a broad foundation for all the theories and criticisms of his successors. The distinctive character of the Christian miracles had been disguised by Blount ; the morality of the Gospel criticised from a false point of view by Shaftesbury ; the evidence from miracles and prophecy had been separately (and, therefore, as evidences, unfairly) judged by Woolston and Collins ; the theory of rationalism had been proposed with plausibleness, consistency, and roundness though without depth, by Tyndal.'

melancholy pre-eminence) in the career of disbelief,

whom possessed no ordinary acuteness : the course, which had been here adopted, was eminently calculated, from the similarity of its general character and of its defects, to promote the direction which the German mind was taking ; inasmuch as the greater part of the early English unbelievers had been carried into unbelief partly by the same intellectual defects, partly by similar unhappy circumstances in the church itself. The sunken state of Christianity through the civil wars, and the controversies of embittered parties, induced in Lord Herbert of Cherbury, the leader of the English Deists, the attempt to remedy the unpracticableness of the existing system, by converting Christianity into a mere scheme of ethics ; they had led Toland to deny all higher truths of Revelation, and had inclined Hobbes to transform Christianity into a mere instrument of state policy. The similar consequences of the thirty years' war, in which, as in England, religion was made the watchword, and to whose prolongation the contentions of religious parties had in part contributed, produced among many of the Germans a similar disposition. The constant appeal to the rationality of the system of Christianity which led Tindal to conceive of it as a mere " republication of the religion of nature," was extensively encouraged in Germany by the translation of the works of the earlier English Apologists, and by the partly allied character of the orthodox school. The erroneous conceptions of inspiration and of prophecy, and the consequent failure to understand the connection of the two covenants, together with the exclusive appeal to the intellect in the proposition of the evidences, which had confused to Collins the argument from prophecy, gave a ready access to his criticisms when transferred into the German Church. The depth of thought and of moral earnestness accordingly which guided Lord Herbert of

and subsequently the French so-called Philosophers * claimed their attention, and though there was much in all to disgust and offend, there was learning

Cherbury in his search after the source of truth in the human mind, the acuteness of Toland and of Hobbes, and the ability evinced in detached criticisms by Collins and Morgan, exerted greater influence, and that upon minds less frivolous or less morbid, than those acted upon by the wit and audacious falsehoods of Voltaire *, or the diseased sensibility of Rousseau. Imitators, but for the most part with few original additions, were stimulated in Germany itself. Translations of our earlier English Apologists opposed to these works did but aggravate the evil, and increase the rational tendency; partly because they had themselves been in some degree tacitly acted upon by the systems which they opposed, partly as being too exclusively intellectual, and lastly, because from the different stage in which German Theology then stood, their very defences contributed to expose some of its untenable, but unyielded points.' Pusey, p. 124. A similar sketch will be found in Stäudlin, *Gesch. der Rat^s. und Sup^s*. p. 110—118, and p. 284—287.

* On the influence of the French literature and philosophy, and on its admirer, Frederic II. King of Prussia, see Mr. Pusey, p. 123. Stäudlin *Gesch. d. Rat^s. und Sup^s*. p. 290.

* As unbelief assumed a different character in each of the three nations according to the ruling turn of mind in each, so had each its separate class of readers: the French unbelievers, from the unsystematic character of their minds, and from their recklessness about the establishment of any fixed principles, followed individual objections into a minuter detail, but without reference to any general theory; they aimed at destroying, without attempting to replace, Christianity; the English Deists, from the predominant practical character of our nation, were generally determined in their investigation by what appears to be of moral practical importance; the German, who, from his more speculative character, pursues enquiry for its own sake, followed his system with more consistency whithersoever it led him.

enough in some, and ingenuity and talents in others to excite very lively emotions in minds which were beginning to lose their fixed and decided notions of the truth and certainty of their own views. The attacks of the Deists too had a peculiar influence by making it necessary for the believer to defend Christianity itself. They had attempted to show on philosophical grounds, that reason and revelation were at variance, and the believer, therefore, felt himself obliged to resort to the same weapons to controvert the position and point out their agreement. The well-known work of Leibnitz * which had this aim, was however so little adapted to the views of theologians, as to fall under their severe rebuke, and even Wolf, who extended and arranged the views of Leibnitz into a regular system, *at first* shared his master's fate †. For he maintained that philosophy was indispensable to theology, and that, together with biblical proofs, a mathematical or strictly demonstrative dogmatical system, according to the principles of reason, was absolutely necessary. His own works carried this theory into practice, and after the first clamours

* Discours de la conformité de la foi avec la raison, in the famous 'Essais de Theodicée,' &c. in the first volume of his works in Dutens' edition. There is a good analysis of the Theodicée in the Ephemerides Lipsienses.

† See Pfaff's Hist. Lit. I. p. 398. Schröckh VI. pp. 100—104. VIII. 26.

against them had subsided, his opinions gained more attention *, and it was not long before he had a

* ‘The previous conflict had acted rather in diminishing the extent than in changing the character of the orthodox school, in detaching some portion of its empire, than in any change of its own internal constitution. The Wolfian philosophy was received into the system itself, and with the temporary appearance of adding to its strength, contributed, ultimately, to its fall. It seems, indeed, to have been the fate of every successive philosophy in Germany, to be at first indiscriminately opposed by the Theologians, and then to have been unduly admitted into their own science. Experience, and a surer ground of faith, has now shewn them the right place of philosophy, as an auxiliary science, and subdued the hostility without producing the yet more unnatural identification. The principal opposition with which Wolf at first met, was from the Pietists, among whom he taught at Halle. The great importance which he ascribed to the employment of his science in Theology, appeared to be dangerous; his adoption of Leibnitz’s “predetermined harmony” to involve the admission of Fatalism; his rejection of some former methods of proving the existence of a Deity, to lead to Atheism. Though he was, however, himself banished, through the combined representation of the Theologians of Halle and of some individuals at Berlin, his system, through its clearness, definiteness, systematic spirit, and consistency, which satisfied the philosophical wants of the times, gained ground continually, and was further cultivated and developed by the adherents whom it acquired. Through these it maintained its ascendancy until near the eighteenth century. Within a few years after the banishment of Wolf, the first attempt was made by a theologian (Canz of Tubingen) to introduce his system into Doctrinal Theology; others quickly succeeded; and these established in different parts of Germany, at

school of vehement admirers who far outstripped him

Gottingen, Helmstadt, Berlin, Greifswald, Weimar, Jena, &c. formed different centres, whence it extended its influence by their oral instruction as well as by their writings. Notwithstanding the unquestioned Christian principles of its author, its reception tended to bring on the instruction of more than the system which it was called in to support, and to the encouragement of Rationalist principles. The faulty portions, indeed, of the previous system alone, would directly suffer from the spirit of deeper and more accurate investigation nurtured by this philosophy; yet indirectly it promoted many habits of mind, in part already existing, through which Christianity itself could not but be affected or mistaken. The disposition to give to reason not a negative merely, but a positive decision in matters of faith was fostered by the habit of proving revealed doctrine by algebraical formulæ, or by philosophical grounds; the abstract mode of treating its subjects aggravated the evils of the existing system, already too exclusively speculative; uncertain philosophical tenets and hypotheses were introduced into the system of doctrine, as if equally established with Scriptural truth; the requisitions, which Christian evidence can be called upon to satisfy, were obscured by the confusion of mathematical and moral proofs; a large portion of that evidence lost by the exclusive appeal to the intellect; and finally, the already diminished consciousness of the positive doctrines of Christianity was yet further weakened by the fabric of natural Theology, formed by this system through the mere omission of what, in the prevailing religious ideas, was peculiarly Christian, and the substitution of proofs from reason for those from Scripture; a skeleton, deprived of the form, and beauty, and life of the once animated being. The ground-work of a bare Deism, or Naturalism, was thus already laid.' Pusey, p. 114.

in the use of his own principles *. We find some of them not content with applying demonstration to the truth of the system, but endeavouring to establish each separate dogma, the Trinity, the nature of the Redeemer, the Incarnation, the eternity of punishment, on philosophical, and strange as it may appear, some of these truths on mathematical grounds †. I need hardly remark that the bases of these demonstrations were frequently principles in themselves extremely questionable, or of which, if true, religion had no need—that the certain and the probable, the problematical and the decided, that which Scripture had set in a clear light, and that which, doubtless for the wisest reason, it had left in obscurity, were all reduced to one form by this method—and that these philosophers chose to demon-

* I have found the fullest detail of the application of the Wolfian philosophy to religion, in a book called, *Philosophiæ Leibnitz. et Wolfianæ usus in Theologia*. 1728. The edition which I used (in the Angelica library at Rome) was, I think, anonymous. Mr. Pusey (p. 116) mentions that the theological faculty at Tübingen destroyed all the copies of the Third Part of this work which they could find.

† See ‘*Darjes Tract. Philos. in quo Plur. Pers. in Deitate, &c. methodo Mathematica demonstratur.*’ Jena, 1735. Schubert *Vernunftigen Gedanken von der ewigkeit der Höllenstrafen*. Jena, 1741. Carpzov. *Œconomia salutis Nov. Test. seu Theol. Rev. Dogm. methodo scientifica adornata*, 1735—1767. See *Mosheim Kirchen-Geschichte* edited by Schlegel. VI. 166.

strate every thing because they thought they could do so—that they laid on one side the interpretation of Scripture, with all the careful examination and rules belonging to it, when these proofs were always existing ready made—that the most arbitrary views arose, because each man saw that he could easily prove whatever his fancy suggested—that men philosophised with Scripture, but not from Scripture, and that the inevitable consequence of the continuation of such a system must have been, that Scripture would no longer have been the ground of religious truth, but a sort of witness which would have been compelled to assent to any conclusions at which this philosophy might arrive*.

Although this system fell very rapidly into neglect (indeed no other fate could attend the application of mathematical evidence to moral and religious truths) I am persuaded that it prepared the way for much of the evil which followed. In a different quarter of the church, a very extended investigation of the subjects of biblical criticism and interpretation had taken place. A variety of writers persuaded themselves at this period, that many commonly received notions were merely human inventions—and

* Some of these reflections are taken from an anonymous writer (quoted by Schröckh) in the Allgemeine Teutsche Bibliothek, Vol. II. p. 183.

were inspired with a very strange and dangerous notion that Christianity was as yet only in a low and degraded state, that it might be perfected *, and that while Scripture contained only the elements, it was the province of human reason to consummate the doctrines which existed there, and bring these germs of truth to maturity. This is perhaps the first open instance in which the new principles fairly appeared—the first instance in which the innovators directly contradicted those wholesome notions, which have ever been entertained by all reasonable men, of the reverence due to antiquity, and openly contradicted what we have seen was the belief and practice of the fathers of their own church. It appears to me quite impossible to doubt that the school of Wolf, from attaching so much weight to demonstrative evidence, had, though quite unintentionally, (for both the founder and most of his disciples were pious and faithful Christians) done very much to create and foster these arrogant pretensions of human reason, and this unreasonable extension of its power and province.

* On this subject, see Wegscheider, § 27. p. 93. Teller, Religion der Volkommenen. Berlin, 1793. Staüdlin Gesch. der Rat^s. und Sup^s. p. 301. Krug, Briefe über der Perfectibilität. d. geoffenbarten Religion. Jena et Leipsic 1795. Lessing Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts Berl. 1780. § 71.

The time indeed was now come when Rationalism was fast developing itself in every quarter. We find that the writers of this period applied themselves to examine into the grounds of the Christian system to treat critically of the dogmas, and to attempt an union of the doctrines with philosophical views. I should speak perhaps even more correctly if I said, that what was done at this period was not so much an attempt to shew the correspondence of the Christian doctrines with reason, as to erect the true system of Christianity on grounds then deemed purely philosophical. It might be too much to say, that such an attempt could not be made by a sincere Christian—but it assuredly could not be made by one who had any just notions of the nature of a Revelation, or of human philosophy. Such a man could not be blind to the mischief of subjecting that, which if it has any value, must be permanent, to that which as a fit object of human thought and investigation, is liable to perpetual change, and susceptible of perpetual progress. Such however was the course pursued, and the Apologists for Christianity themselves seemed rather anxious to admit the claims of reason to judge of every thing in revelation, and then to prove that Christianity could meet those claims, than to lay down a distinct view of what could and what could not be demanded from a revelation. I shall describe

the state of things which followed, in the words of a late writer on the causes of Rationalism *. ‘Not only did the first theologians, who incidentally, or by too exclusive or partial a following up of their systems, gave occasion to the superficializing or the rejection of Christian doctrine, Baumgarten, Ernesti, and Michaelis, themselves still firmly adhere to them, but some even of their next disciples, as Semler and Morus, did not altogether abandon any fundamental article. The course in which this declension was completed, was rather such as might have been expected from the previous mere intellectual conception of Christianity, the gradual deadening of the ideas peculiarly Christian, the unperceived substitution of mere moral doctrines, which bore more or less analogy to those of Christianity which were now longer understood, and finally the attempt to conciliate Rationalism by bringing down Christianity to its low and carnal standard, than that of direct and intentional opposition.’ After noticing the evils done by the Wolfian school, and by that of Baumgarten, which arose from it and gave birth to many of the principal innovators, though Baumgarten himself was a sincere Christian, this writer speaks as follows of Michaelis, and those who came a little after him. ‘The adherence of Michaelis to the established system, and his respect for religion, is probably

* Pusey’s Historical Enquiry, &c. p. 129.

mainly to be attributed to the impressions made by the intercourse of the Pietists, among whom he was educated by his father, the excellent J. H. Michaelis. Too light-minded, as himself says, to adopt their tone of pious feeling, he yet retained an external conviction of the truth of Christianity, endeavoured to remove objections by new theories, and much to the surprise of his younger contemporaries, held to the last many parts of the older system, which had been modified or laid aside. Throughout are the pernicious consequences of his mere outward persuasion manifest. Destitute of that conviction, which can alone give a comprehensive insight into the real character of Revelation, and the harmonious relation of its several parts, he had no guide which might enable him to perceive what might be safely admitted, without detriment to the system itself; he consequently, according to the usual error of persons taking only a partial view, frequently opposed the objection, instead of the principle upon which the objection was founded; endeavoured to remove it by theories in conformity with mere human systems, and strengthened it equally by his concessions, and by his own inadequate and arbitrary defences *.' To

* 'There is no work probably of Michaelis, at all touching upon religious subjects, to which these observations do not apply; "the Commentaries on the Laws of Moses," and "the Notes on the Old Testament," are full of these perverted applications of

a mind possessed of no enlarged principles, every minute difficulty obtained an intrinsic and perplexing force; his belief was a reed, ready to be shaken by every fresh breeze; all which had been previously won, seemed again staked upon the issue of each petty skirmish, and in the very descriptive comparison of Lessing on this sort of combatants, he was like the timid soldier who loses his life before an outpost, without once seeing the country of which he would gain possession. The disadvantages, however, to which he thus exposed the defence of Chris-

mere civil, often of modern, principles, unfounded theories and low views; his translation of the Bible indicates his common-place conceptions of Scripture: his "History of the Resurrection" evidences occasionally both his wrong principles of defence, and a readiness, which he seems to have deemed praiseworthy, to abandon his previous belief, in case it should be found to be false; his commentary on "the three most important Psalms concerning Christ" is a specimen of his failure, from want of enlarged views, to see the right principles of exposition, and the arbitrary theories, and unsound criticisms to which he was consequently driven, &c. Deep insight into religion were indeed inconsistent with the intemperate habits and low moral character of Michaelis, which defiled his books occasionally, and still more frequently his lectures, with obscenity.'

It is somewhat curious to compare these just censures with the extraordinary eulogium on Michaelis in the life published in Eichhorn's Allgemeine Bibliothek. of which the reader will find a translation in the New York Biblical Repertory for April, 1826.

tianity, were the least evils of the system; far more resulted from the common-place views of the persons, actions, institutions, and doctrines of Scripture, to which it gave rise: not only the theories of Eichhorn, (his pupil) constructed on the assumed human origin of every phenomenon in revealed religion, but even the low and vulgar tone of mind, in which Paulus degraded every thing spiritual and divine in the Gospels to the sphere of civil every-day life, the mean and earthly principles which he attributes to its actors, (by which far more injury has been produced than by the soon exploded and now almost forgotten explanations of the miracles,) seem but the natural and inevitable consequence of this exclusion of religion from the theories of Michaelis.

“ Theology, thus already on the decline, naturally sunk still further, though in very different degrees, in the next generation; in Semler, the pupil of Baumgarten and of Ernesti; in Morus, the inheritor of Ernesti's principles; and in Eichhorn and Koppe, the disciples of Michaelis. Of these Morus and Koppe superficialized still further the Christian ideas; Morus especially, devoid of any settled principles, though in his *Epitome of Christian Doctrine* he opposed none of the Christian doctrines, led the way to their subsequent rejection, by his representations of the uncertainty of the conflicting views; yet

more perhaps by the arbitrary principle, which this hesitation caused him to propose in his doctrinal lectures, that so much only should be retained as tended to moral improvement. What was described to be thus uncertain, his disciples, naturally very inadequate judges of what was really practical, of course laid aside."

Two of the writers of an early date appear to me to deserve especial notice. They were especially distinguished by the production of principles even at that time (about the middle of the last century) quite as violent and as mischievous as any which have been since obtruded on us, and were in fact the parents of those extraordinary alterations in the Christian system to which we shall hereafter come. In the works of Basedow *, there is a con-

* See Tittman, *Pragmat. Geschichte*, p. 164. and Ernesti *Neue Theol. Bibl.* vol. V. p. 56—87, where there is a Review of his *Philalethie*. He was born at Hamburgh, 1724, became professor of philosophy in the Gymnasium of Altona, and afterwards director of the Institute for Education at Dessau till 1778, and died at Magdeburg in 1790. Göthe says, (*Life*, vol. ii. p. 91, in the English translation) that Basedow had a restless passion for giving a new meaning to every thing, and regulating the doctrines and rites of the Church according to his own caprice. He mercilessly and inconsiderately overthrew ideas which, though not literally expressed in the Bible, are derived from it by skilful interpretation. On all occasions he declared himself in the most

stant attempt to reduce Christianity to a pure system of natural religion, which remains a mere name without peculiar character or foundation, and all the truth of which as a system disappears with its distinction from the religion of nature. The other

unreserved and decided way, a sworn enemy to the Trinity, and he was incessantly arguing against that article of faith. Schröckh thus speaks of Basedow, In the mean time a crisis of great violence broke out upon the system of Dogmatics, which not only affected their *form*, as is often the case, but also their materials, so that it appeared likely that this system must cease to be *Christian*. The first preparations for this change we find in the works of a celebrated teacher, J. B. Basedow. In his 'Philalethie, &c.' (Altona, 1764) he called in question many doctrines of the Christian system, and expressed a certain indifference towards instruction in this religion. But in other writings ('Methodischer Unterricht der Jugend in der Religion und Sittenlehre der Vernunft' and others) he carried this much farther. In the place of the chief doctrines of Christianity, he set up a Christian Naturalism, &c. &c. Schröckh VIII. p. 53. Mr. Pusey speaks with justice of this man and his party. 'This shallowness was promoted by the substitution of the rightly-called 'Popular Philosophy,' for that of Wolf, through such writers as Garve, Eberhardt, M. Mendelsohn, and Basedow. Incapable of deep or consistent speculation, they laid 'sound common sense,' (the usual refuge of shallowness, or of deficiency in speculative powers) as the basis of their philosophy, and of their criticisms of Christianity; a superficial empiricism was the ground-work of that mere shadow of Natural Religion, to which they reduced Christianity; and they themselves scarcely suspected the precariousness of their own arbitrary structure, now that they had undermined the foundation of positive belief, and

writer Steinbart * proceeds precisely on the same

were consequently astonished at the Spinozism of Lessing, and at Jacobi's vindication of its consistency for the mere understanding. A shallow theory of Eudaimonism stood at the head of their system. Happiness was the highest destination of man, the end to which it was the purpose of God to lead him; an intelligent pursuit of happiness its morality, and to find one's own happiness in that of others, the most elevated virtue, to which it rose †.

* See his *System der reinen Philosophie*, 1778, and Tittman, p. 164. Schröckh thus speaks of him, 'G. S. Steinbart, Professor of Theology (!) and Philosophy at Frankfort on the Oder, endeavoured, in his "*System der reinen Philosophie*" (Züllichau, 1778) yet more openly (than Basedow) and not without violence, to put Naturalism into the place of Christianity. According to him pure Christianity (i. e. Christianity purified from its peculiar doctrines about Christ, his Reconciliation, &c. which are only human additions to it) is the most perfect guide to the higher happiness of mankind.' Afterwards Schröckh mentions that Steinbart considered Christ as a mere man, though one of high gifts, and adds, "he allows that the faith of common Christians must rest on historical grounds; still they must clear away the doctrines commonly given out as pure Christianity." Schröckh VIII. p. 53, 54. 'Scriptural doctrine,' says Mr. Pusey, 'having thus been converted into speculation by one party, superficialized by another, and treated as uncertain and vague by a third, there remained but one more declension, to which, under the then circumstances, all these systems tended, the final amalgamation, namely, of Christianity with

† 'Twisten, S. 193, in whose words much of the immediately preceding statement of the external auxiliary causes of unbelief is conveyed; they do not rest, however, on his authority alone, but are in Germany universally regarded as occasionally contributing to unbelief; more, however, than the circumstances, which incidentally called into existence what was already formed, they cannot in their own nature be.'

principle; his writings attempt to build up Christianity the more earnest of the systems by which it was opposed, but to which it had been gradually approaching. What was left of Christianity was too little substantial to present any obstacle to this now natural union; nor is there any reason to doubt the assertion of the author of this last measure, that his object was to lead the sceptics of his time to the acceptance of Christianity. One of the most pious of his opponents regarded his enterprise as a sincere, though an unhappy attempt to conciliate such of his contemporaries as felt the necessity of religion, but either knew not, or doubted, pure Christianity. The character of Steinbart seems to have been determined partly by a too ascetic early education, partly by the habit of a mere intellectual and subtle consideration of Christian truth, which was engendered by the study of the over-refining method of Baumgarten. The two elements of religious and scientific knowledge were in him never combined. The perusal of Voltaire, which at first produced pain and disquiet, gained a gradually increased influence over his exclusively intellectual conviction; and while his early education preserved in him a regard to virtue with a general reverence towards God, and the study of the apologetic works of Locke and Foster infused a respect towards Christ, the perception of the errors, which the reference to experience alone, as the sole source of Christian knowledge, had occasioned in his pietistic teachers, fostered in him the far more dangerous tendency altogether to neglect it. His system consequently, though sincere, was miserably shallow. As happiness in his view is the only object proposed to man, so are human passions the only impediment; and the sum of the benefits conferred through Christianity is, that it promotes that happiness by awakening the reflection of mankind to their real and common good, and by the removal of the idea of arbitrary requisitions on the part of God, which impede the right working of reason, and perplex the na-

tianity from its foundation on natural knowledge, and to remove from it every thing which reason could not by itself suggest; and they leave little for his successors to do except to unite his principles with the systems of philosophy, which afterwards came into fashion *. Of course this attempt to refer Christianity to the wisdom of nature, was accompanied by a philosophical criticism of its principles and doctrines. Indeed there was no concealment of the

tural conscience; that it contains a perfect system of morals; strengthens through its authority the natural suggestions of reason by the knowledge of the superintendence of God, by the hope of future rewards, and by the employment of prayer; gives an insight into the predominance of present good, and an anticipation of unbounded progress in various perfection. All deeper views of the holiness of God, of spiritual degeneracy and spiritual capabilities of man, and of the means by which the lost energy may be restored, every thing in Christianity peculiarly Christian, and even the more earnest aspirations of the more natural man, are wanting: "The system of pure philosophy, or Christian doctrine of happiness" was neither philosophy nor Christianity, but served, after having been much disputed, to reconcile them in the degraded state in which they then existed. The two most distinguished of his opponents, Seiler and Sixt, Steinbart maintains, differ only in words from himself.' Pusey, p. 150.

* Töllner published a work in 1764 called 'The True Grounds why God has not accompanied Revelation with clearer proofs,' and a second part in 1766, called 'Proof that God leads mankind to happiness by Revelation in Nature.' These works seem to have had some influence in their day, and deserve the consideration of the enquirer. A sketch of them will be found in Staüdlin's Rational. und Supernaturalismus, p. 133—137.

object in view. That object was the emancipation of Christianity from all its peculiar dogmas, which were pronounced to be the invention of the schools ; and philosophy, which in Wolf's reign, a few years before, had been called in to defend every doctrine, was now used to get rid of most of them and give the whole system a philosophical dress. But what notions of the study of theology could these writers have, what could be the result to be expected from men who, instead of Scripture, used philosophy, instead of history, philosophical reasonings, and instead of the usual exegetical knowledge, made use of the power put into the hands of the philosophizing writer by the common opinion which never distinguishes between the form and the contents * ?

Before I go on to shew the results which did take place—I may remark that about this period, and indeed a little earlier, the Symbolical books had become an object of the most violent hatred with these divines, who claimed for reason a full liberty of judgment on religious truth, and many vehement attacks had been made on their authority and usefulness. Prominent amongst their opponents stands Busching †, who not content with the victory which he

* This remark is, I think, Schröckh's, but I cannot recover the reference.

† Some account of him will be found in Schröckh, vol. viii. p. 196.

deemed himself to have achieved over their authority, and that of the Nicene creed, rejected entirely all belief in the value of the sacraments, and in the doctrine of the corruption of mankind, and maintained that we want no assistance from Heaven to correct and improve our nature. He was shortly followed by Semler, who denied all internal power of obligation to the confessions of his church, rested their external obligation on the power of princes in church matters, and confined it to the teachers of religion; for he contended that these confessions were merely theoretical views of certain principles, which could be useful to no one else, and even for them if agreed on great principles, he saw no use in creeds and confessions but to prevent them from using due liberty in gaining better notions of Christianity. But it will be necessary to take a more detailed view of Semler's opinions, both as the sources from which the subsequent mischief sprung, and as affording some of the most brilliant specimens of that extraordinary talent for the construction of groundless hypotheses, which distinguishes the Rationalizing divinity. It will afterwards be less necessary for me to give many farther examples of the *methods* by which the more recent absurdities have been brought to light, and I shall then be enabled to present at once a simple sketch of the various changes in religious opinion with respect to revelation

in general, the inspiration, credibility, and canon of Scripture, the Christian revelation in particular, and the character, history, and miraculous powers of its founder.

Semler * was brought up in the bosom of the Pietists; and though his character manifestly unfitted him for the reception of their more enthusiastic tenets, he was certainly deeply impressed with two of their opinions. He had learned, I mean, from them to undervalue every thing which had not a direct tendency to promote the practice of virtue; and their dislike to controversy had given him a distaste to all the doctrines which served as a founda-

* I should refer generally to his Life in Eichhorn's *Allgem. Bibl.* vol. V. Part I.—although the remarks here are rather derived from the impression made on me by his works, and the facts derived from Schröckh and other sources. It is singular, that Chalmers' *Biog. Dict.* contains no notice of so very remarkable a man. Mr. Coneybeare (*Bampton Lectures*, p. 277.) characterises him as 'possessed of an erudition on biblical and ecclesiastical subjects even beyond that of his proverbially industrious countrymen, with considerable acuteness rather than comprehensiveness or depth of intellect—illiberal in his critiques and sarcasms—disposed to question and overturn the decisions of others rather than to establish any clear and tangible principles of his own—with all the ostentatious pretensions of a reformer or discoverer, and yet little entitled to the praise of originality, either in conception or execution, but borrowing all the essential parts of his system from Socinian or worse sources.'

tion for it. Gifted by nature with a most powerful mind, with gigantic industry, and the most unquenchable appetite for literary research, these happy predispositions were unfortunately in great measure counteracted by the faults of his early education. He had never been taught to exchange rapidity and conjecture, for patience and accuracy. He glanced over the fields of history and criticism with a keenness indeed which discovered occasionally minutiae that had escaped others, but with a rapidity which overlooked what their more cautious examination pointed out—and then he denied the existence of what he had failed to perceive. Nothing can be more striking than the way in which he occasionally combined the fruits of his various researches, except the carelessness with which those researches were made, and the sort of fated blindness with which he neglected or rejected the most material element of the whole he was attempting to form. He never hesitated in short to desert sober and substantial truth for striking but partial views, subtle error and ingenious theory. To these qualities he added others which are very frequent ingredients in such a character—an undoubting estimation for all his own speculations, and a rash boldness in bringing them into public view. As the historian of religious doctrines, it was his constant attempt to show that a large part of them rested entirely on human authority—but his

hardest task was to treat of those to which he could not refuse the authority of Scripture, but which, because he could not discern what he called their utility, he rashly and impiously pronounced to possess none. He then boldly invented an hypothesis to get rid of what offended him. He contended that we are not to take all the declarations of Scripture as addressed to us*, but to consider them as in many points purposely adapted to the feelings and dispositions of the age when they originated, but by no means to be received by another and a more enlightened period. This was the origin of that famous theory of Accommodation† which Semler carried to

* See his life in Eichhorn, *ubi supra*, p. 75. I find his accommodation theory mentioned in the Preface to his Paraphrase of the Epistle to the Romans, published at Halle, 1769. See a review of it in *Ernesti N. Theol. Bibl. X.* p. 497.

† I must refer here to some admirable remarks on this theory by Mr. Coneybeare, in his first lecture, p. 27, and following. It may be right to add, that we must not confound this theory with the older one of the same name, but with an object somewhat different though sufficiently mischievous. The object of the older theory was rather to destroy the evidence of Christianity which is derived from prophecy and the types of the Old Testament, by showing that what relates to them is only accommodated to Christ in an improper sense. A sufficient account of this theory and of the way in which it was brought forward by the Polish Socinians, will be found in a *Disputatio de Accommodatione*, by Hakspan, p. 417—460 of a work called *Disputationum Theoll. et Philoll. Sylloge*.

great lengths, but which in the hands of his followers became the most formidable weapon ever devised for the destruction of Christianity. Whatever men were disinclined to receive in the New Testament, and yet could not with decency reject while they called themselves Christians, and retained the Scripture, they got rid of by this theory, and quietly maintained that the Apostles, and in fact Jesus himself, had adapted himself, not only in his way of teaching, but also in his doctrines *, to the barbarism, ignorance, and prejudices of the Jews, and that it was, therefore, our duty to reject the whole of this temporary part of Christianity, and retain only what is substantial

Altdorff. 1663. See also Mr. Coneybeare's seventh lecture, p. 276, and following.

* South has stated what the Apostles did with great exactness and force. 'As right reason most certainly lies at the foot of all true religion, so the Apostles embraced all that, which by genuine consequence was derived from it, by any sort or sect of men whatever, forasmuch as they made not those deductions under the formal notion of such a sect or party, but as they were rational men arguing rightly upon the general received principles of nature; and accordingly the Apostles countenanced and fell in with truth so offered, wheresoever they found it; they valued a pearl though took up from a dunghill. The other instance of their wisdom,' (the first was their not opposing persons or things when not interfering with the Gospel,) 'given by our Saviour to the Apostles was their resolute opposing all doctrines and interests whatever so far as they stood in opposition to the Gospel.' South's Sermons, vol. V. Sermon. xi. p. 462. ed. 1737.

and eternal. Every notion not suitable to existing opinions was, therefore, treated as mere adaptation to former ones—every thing, for example, mysterious and difficult, the very notion indeed that Christianity was a revelation from Heaven, was said to be merely a wise condescension to the weakness of former ages*—and nothing at last was left but what common experience and natural religion suggested. I shall have occasion to take some farther notice of this theory hereafter, but I cannot mention it at all without adding to it an expression of the strongest abhorrence. There seems to be a curse attached to men who hold these degrading notions of revelation, which condemns them for ever to low and groveling views, and blinds them in all instances to the existence and operation of any of the more elevated virtues, as it does here to the lofty and uncompromising nature of truth. That I should teach the truths committed to me in the manner and the language best adapted to my hearers, is not only right, but my bounden duty; but that I should add to those truths in order to gain them a favourable reception, that I should diminish their force in order to obviate offence or

* Ammon's phrase is (*Summa Theol. Christ.* p. 21. ed. 1816.)

'*Quid quod ipsam legationis divinæ notionem ad infantiam generis humani ablegarent.*' He refers to Henke *Neues Magazin für Exegese*, &c. I. p. 133. and *Ueber offenbarung und Mythologie*, Berlin, 1799.

disgust, that I should clothe them in colours which never belonged to them, and introduce them by means of striking and attractive falsehoods, would be proceedings which would ensure my condemnation on the justest grounds, if I were introducing a mere human system of morality, and which would stamp me at once as an impostor, if I pretended that the doctrine I taught was divine. Strange indeed must these men's notions be of a Divine, or even of a sincere human teacher, when they can believe that he would endeavour to recommend a practical system of the most lofty virtues by the sacrifice of that virtue which gives character and value to the rest *.

* As I am anxious to put my readers in possession of sufficient materials to judge of Semler, I subjoin the remarks of a gentleman whose views of Theology are very different from mine. I need hardly observe, that there are some expressions in it to which I can by no means assent. I know not, for example, which Mr. Pusey considers as 'the least important biblical books,' but I do know that Semler's principles lead to the rejection of all the Old Testament, and to a very doubtful reception of many parts of the New. I have stated elsewhere my objections to Mr. Pusey's views of the earlier Theology. But yet I am bound to allow that there is much worth consideration in the views here taken of Semler's character and writings. "The influence even of Semler, the most direct founder of the innovating school, lay more in the principles which he introduced, and in his own intellectual defects, than in any direct rejection of fundamental doctrines. The piety of his early days accompanied him in some measure through life, and became in his later years

I return to Semler, who soon proceeded to attack

still more decided. His intellectual character was a singular combination of great advantages and great defects. On the one hand he possessed amazing retentiveness of memory, and a very considerable acuteness: on the other he was entirely devoid of all philosophical talent, all power of extensive survey, of clear perception, and of accurate reasoning. His extensive reading supplied consequently only a mass of facts and ideas, which floated indistinctly before him; his acuteness suggested continually a number of minuter combinations, which his mind was not sufficiently systematic to correct or limit by reference to the whole subject to which they related, or to perceive the consequences to which they led. When in his latter days he saw how his principles had been developed by others, he repented that he had gone so far. Against the *Wolfenbüttel Fragments* he wrote with earnestness; he opposed conscientiously, and prevented the appointment of Bahrdr as Professor at Halle; he preserved himself (however difficult the mode may be to understand) from the results of his own scientific investigation, by what is called his 'private religion,' (the religion apparently of feeling, whose separate and independent validity he wished to establish); and some of his theories, which have been most extensively abused, seem to have owed their character to the indefiniteness and obscurity with which he conveyed them. In his treatise on *dæmoniac possessions* there was nothing in any wise derogatory to the Evangelists, much less any thing implying any "accommodation" in Christ; yet his undistinguishing contemporaries pronounced the opinion to be irreconcilable with faith and piety, or proceeded to deny the existence of any agent of evil superior to man. The indiscriminate stiffness of the preceding age yet survived sufficiently to perpetuate the reaction which it had caused; and a shallow generation, accustomed by

the canon of Scripture. He laid down the usual

the still continued mode of handling the subjects of Theology, to regard them as mere theoretical problems, seems to have thought, that the only mode of recovering liberty was to depart as widely as possible from the system which had fettered them. Every hint was eagerly seized, and under the protection of a certain correspondence with the views of those whose only aim was to attain that freedom of enquiry, which is an essential principle of Protestantism, others found admission, who differed from them in their first principles, as well as in their object, but were included in the same category by the adherents of the traditional scheme. Science unnaturally separated from Theology, whose end should be a scientific statement of divine truth, became its foe. It was from this cause alone, that the revival of historical interpretation by Semler became the most extensive instrument of the degradation of Christianity.* After pointing out the advantages of the Historical Interpretation properly conducted, the writer proceeds: 'The principle had already in part been developed by Baumgarten: the unsystematic and unclear mind of his disciple saw neither the limits, by which it must in its own nature be circumscribed, nor the other principles by which it must be conditioned. The fundamental errors of Semler's application of it are the same which have already been noticed in Ernesti; the same exclusive adherence to his single principle, the same failure to perceive the connection * of the Christian

* 'This connection of the two dispensations had been in great measure obliterated by the Orthodox system, partly from overlooking the gradual character of Revelation, and finding every thing already fully revealed under the preparatory covenant, partly from the neglect of the historical interpretation; the study of the Apocryphal books, or of Philo, which supply a necessary link in the chain, by shewing how revealed truth had, during the temporary cessation of any new discoveries, been developed by human reflection in conformity to the earlier Scriptures, had been altogether neglected; the revelation in the New Testament

base, that canonical books must be of Divine autho-

with the Jewish revelation, as the completion of this earlier education of mankind, the same inability to discriminate between what was principally intended for contemporaries, and what is directly also of eternal value; they were derived in part from the same source, the want of that deeper insight into the nature of the religion, which a constantly improving personal Christianity alone can give. Such inexperience alone could convert the everlasting contrast of *σάρξ* and *πνεῦμα* into the mere temporary contrast of the Judaizing and narrowing conception of Christianity, with the freer views which St. Paul taught; have divided consequently the books of the New Testament into those in which the *σάρξ*, and those in which the *πνεῦμα*, predominated, or have conceived that the sole object of the Epistle to the Romans, was to oppose the particularism of the Jews, and to prove that the heathen also might attain eternal life. The theory of accommodation was an unavoidable consequence of this perverted form of historical interpretation. Still more injurious would the same system obviously be to the right understanding of the Old Testament, while the inducement to apply it was increased, by the inability of Semler to comprehend an extensive scheme, and by the greater faultiness of the system, which he could not but oppose. The confusion, further, which the orthodox system of Doctrinal The-

had consequently become insulated and abstract; and Semler's principle, that "Revelation must consist of purely unknown truths," "that it was unworthy of it to say anew what had been already said," was a natural consequence of this system. It was this dogma, however, which most injured Semler's great principle of historical interpretation. It followed from this that Revelation could not be merely confirmatory, that whatever in it did agree with what previously existed, was mere *ἐνυκατάβασις*; that whatever had been previously taught by the Pharisees, (though in fact indirectly derived from the earlier revelation,) could form no part of the later communication. On the same principles, however, even the meagre portion, yet left, of that scheme of truth, which was destined to regenerate mankind, must be still further reduced.'

ity, but their Divinity was to be established on a new and most dangerous principle. The mark of a

ology had introduced between essentials and non-essentials, biblical truth, and human developement or mode of statement, and the want in Semler himself of the deep Christian knowledge, and clearness of thought, which would have enabled him to unravel it, rendered his vast study of Christian doctrine in its earlier forms an inextricable labyrinth, a mere source of perplexity and uncertainty. The mind, long accustomed to derive its Christian knowledge from the mechanical study of the letter of a confined form, had lost the clue, which would have enabled it to trace in this variety of statements, and in what, to a superficial mind, appeared to be contradictions, the unity of the same spirit manifesting itself in various forms, according to the character of the individuals through whom it was conveyed. The former school had found in the Bible itself all the subsequent developments, which later speculation on its truths had subsequently, often indeed rightly and consistently, evolved: a superficial age, dazzled with the suddenness of the discovery, that parts of the received system were by time alone thus developed, and convinced only of the untenableness of that system, employed itself in remarking and accumulating the apparent differences: the higher unity in which much of this discordance would have harmonized, lay beyond their sphere. Doctrinal Theology assumed consequently in this school a critical and negative, rather than a positive, character: the sum of doctrine, considered as certainly fixed, gradually diminished, the developement of the connection even of the general truths of Religion became less frequent, and in the energetic description of the often-quoted author, who has, with the deepest insight, and soundest judgment, traced the whole course of doctrinal theology, "they cleared with great exertions the site of the overthrown palace from the encumbering

Divine origin was to be the utility of the work, or its tendency to promote virtue. I pass over the insufficiency of the proof to establish the Divine origin of a writing. I acknowledge its sufficiency to disprove such an origin, supposing the existence of a competent judge. But who, or what is the judge, in this case? The decision is obviously left to human ca-

heap of ruins; they dug deep trenches to bring better materials to light; but as if their strength were exhausted with these efforts, they left it to each individual to put together a petty hut for his own use, if he should find the foundations still safe, and the materials adequate to the purpose; or, if they undertook the trouble for him, it was but a temporary construction, which, in its turn, was again to be laid in heaps *." Against these principles and this conduct of Semler, (which, it must again be repeated, arose from no indisposition to the doctrines, but originated in his sense of the necessities of theology, and were perverted only by the indistinctness of his views) little opposition seems to have been made, (at least none is recorded,) though they led to the ultimate temporalizing and annihilation of every thing peculiarly Christian in the system; while long-enduring contests were excited by his partial deviation from the received opinion on *dæmoniaks*, or from his doubts with regard to some few of the least important biblical books, with regard to which, in the early church, free scope had been permitted to difference of opinion. The orthodox school guarded with vigilance the number of the repositories of their treasures, but were unable to detect the substitution by which these treasures were deprived of their value.' Pusey, pp. 138—147.

* 'Twisten's Dogmatik,' S. 244.

price, which in compliance with the altered notions of a different period, or a fashionable philosophy, may in this age reject, what in the last it received. Who will be content to leave to such an arbiter the power of pronouncing a character of writings which may come from God, on which salvation may depend, and the real nature of which we have the power of ascertaining by legitimate evidence? Yet in this way did Semler venture to judge of the Sacred Writings, and to eject from the canon, without hesitation, those which did not meet his approbation. He decided that the Christian was not bound to receive a single book of the Old Testament, as of Divine origin; for he declared that man could receive no moral improvement from them. The historical books of the New Testament were only valuable for the weaker brother, who must be guided rather by history, than by any principles formally proposed. Even the others are only to be valued by the stronger-minded Christian, till he has made himself master of the ideas they contain. He may then cast them from him, and pursue by his own strength the path of Christianity, to an extent whither they could never lead him*. The principle which Semler applied to the books, he applied likewise to their contents, and judged of the history and doctrines by their utility

* See the Life before referred to, in Eichhorn's Magazine, p. 91—93.

alone, without any reference to the external evidence of prophecies and miracles.

These were his general principles; let us look shortly at some particular instances of his treating sacred subjects. One * of his favourite theories was that two parties of Christians existed from the commencement—the first anxious to connect Christianity closely in its origin and doctrines with the Jewish system; the other, a gnostic and free-thinking school. Christ, he tells us, conciliated both; when he addressed the Judaizing party, he professed a reverence for the Jewish system; when speaking to his Gnostic followers, he strongly opposed these Jewish prejudices. After his death, Peter placed himself at the head of the Jewish converts, the scene of whose operation was confined to Judæa. St. Paul took the lead in the Gnostic party, which endeavoured to generalize Christianity, and prepare it for the conversion of the Gentiles. Each sect proceeded in its own peculiar principles, and after the death of the apostles, open hostilities commenced. In the second century, the evil of such a contest was perceived, and the scheme of a Catholic church was formed. Attempts were made to conciliate the plans of St. Peter and St. Paul: and for this purpose, without any authority in history, *some share in the*

* See a more copious detail of it in the Life, p. 59—72.

holy task of converting the heathens was attributed to St. Peter. The four gospels which we possess, were those of the Jewish party ; the documents which recorded Christ's addresses to the Gnostics have perished, except the gospel of Marcion—the letters of St. Paul belonged to the Gnostics, and the Catholic epistles were written to promote the union of the two parties. With regard to the epistle to the Hebrews, which so directly contradicted this hypothesis, Semler asserted that St. Paul wrote it to please the Jewish party, at a period of his career when he had some hopes of conciliating them, a hope which he afterwards renounced ; and with it of course the principles and professions which he had assumed as a mere matter of convenience. But where are the grounds of this monstrous hypothesis ? Its base is the ascription of duplicity to the holy Founder of our religion, and the great apostle of the Gentiles. I pass over the impiety of such an imputation if they were Divine teachers, and its absurdity if they were really moral, though human ones ; and I ask, on what does it rest ? As to Jesus, it rests on nothing whatever, even by Semler's confession, to be found in the canonical gospels ; but on a few words scattered amid the fragments of an heretic, and branded as forgeries from the beginning ; and on the evidence which Semler imagined *might have been* found in documents, the value of which, had they existed, must

have rested on the destruction of every idea we have as to the present canon, and the contents of which neither he nor any one else can know, as they perished in the very earliest ages of Christianity. As to St. Paul, it rests on an arbitrary hypothesis as to the date of a particular work; and nothing can more fully stamp the character of Semler, than his never hesitating to rest on this creation of his own, an accusation of falsehood against any man, and much more against one whose bold, impetuous, and uncompromising love of truth, is recorded in every page of his writings and his history.—I can merely mention some of his other theories; indeed they require no refutation. He imagined * that the epistles were not intended for the community, but for the ministers of each church, in contradiction to the plain declaration of almost every chapter of every epistle. He rejected the testimony, even on historical points, of those Fathers of whose understanding he deemed lightly; and formed a strange theory †, that the

* See the Life, p. 72. This theory is not at all connected with the probable supposition, that from the difficulty of multiplying copies, and the danger of possessing them, these epistles were principally kept in the hands of these ministers. See, for instance, the very acute Answer to the New Trial of the Witnesses by an Oxford layman.

† 'His theory, is that all those works, though bearing the names of different authors, proceeded from one and the same shop, established at Rome, and were the produce of the joint labours of a

works ascribed to Tertullian, Justin Martyr and Irenæus, were the composition of a later age. In doctrinal points, he undertook to defend the errors of Pelagius ; in our Lord's Satisfaction, he rejected all notions of the justice of God as requiring it ; in our Reconciliation, he maintained that no external work of a mediator was concerned, but that the whole was a moral operation within the human mind.

These are a very few among the wild hypotheses of one, who, even in this country, has been called the immortal Semler—these are the fruits which mankind have reaped in his case from a rash and innovating spirit in religion. Experience and reason show indeed alike, that from such a spirit in such a cause, no other results can ever be expected ; and that when religion requires to be cleansed from the earthly or human additions and alterations which she may have undergone, the remedy is to be found from a better spirit, and a different quarter. But to the individual who indulges in such a spirit, what will be the result, what the

set of men, who entered into combination to falsify history and corrupt the Scriptures, principally with a view of throwing discredit on certain persons, Montanus, Valentinus, &c. whom they thought fit to brand with the title of heretics.' Bishop Kaye's *Eccl. History of Second and Third Centuries illustrated from Tertullian*, p. 71. The refutation of this absurdity follows.

operation on his own mind? If man must err, if he will not be content with the religion of Christ as Christ taught it, far, far better for him is it to believe too much than too little. He may assent perhaps to error—but the principle of his belief is still pure and unsullied. He may receive some things perhaps which never came from his heavenly Father, with the reverence which is due to the word of God alone; but his reverence, his affection, his child-like love of that word still remain, and without them there is no knowledge, no real feeling, no sincere reception of the elevating and improving truths of Christianity. Well would it be for those who with rash and unhallowed hands attack the fabric of Christian doctrine, to remember one, and assuredly one of the most important of its doctrines for the direction and formation of our faith, that the grand requisite for a Christian believer is a patient teachableness, and a throwing down of the strong holds of personal vanity and self-confidence. Well if they remembered the words of him, who spake as never man spake, and in simple words poured forth the treasures of eternal wisdom, that except we become as little children, we shall in no wise inherit the kingdom of heaven, we shall neither attain to a true knowledge of it here, nor a participation of its glories hereafter.

CHAPTER IV.

I have now brought down the history of the German church as far as the time of Semler, and given some view of his writings, and of the principles, which in the earlier and middle part of his life, he adopted and advocated. I thought such a view necessary, because Semler appears to be recognized by the members of the modern school, as its father and founder. By that expression, however, we are by no means to understand that they accede either to his principles or his practice in theology. On the contrary, they perpetually erect theories * in entire contradiction to his ; as, for example, in the case of St. Paul, whom they frequently reprobate for his blind attachment to Judaism, while if they listened

* There is a strong instance in the Life of Semler by Eichhorn, already referred to (p. 73.) Eichhorn there reprehends Semler for treating of the revelations as the work of a fanatic, written to promote enthusiastic notions of the Messiah, and says, that Semler's mind was not fit to treat of such a work. The fact is, that Eichhorn had himself proposed another theory as to the revelation, viz. that it is a drama representing, in many alternating scenes, the downfall of Paganism and Judaism.

to their founder, they would be told that the great apostle endeavoured to extirpate every mark of it from the Christian system, and placed himself at the head of the free-thinking party, which opposed it. But this designation of honour is given to Semler, because he first * taught the German divines to reject the divine origin of Scripture, and its universal obligation, to think and to speak lightly of a large portion of what at least is received by every Christian church as Christian doctrine, and to produce without hesitation and without awe, theories which at all events *involve* charges of the most serious nature against the moral character of the founder, and the first teachers of our religion. His lessons have not been lost—the evil seed which he committed to the earth produced an hundred-fold—the harvest time was come—and even the sower would have contemplated with surprise and horror the evil and poisonous crop which has sprung from the seed he planted. Even in these days, when the novelty of any opinion seems too often to atone for its infamy, and he is most admired and most applauded, who casts farthest from him what the wise of former days venerated and loved, there are things to be found in the works of Semler's followers, which

* This merit seems generally allowed him. See Wegscheider, p. 24. Note A. Mr. Pusey (p. 138.) calls him 'the most direct founder of the innovating school.'

would not be heard without loathing and disgust. There is a daringness of disbelief, a wantonness of blasphemy to be found in them, which in a professed unbeliever we should expect and understand ; but when we turn from the works where it is found, to the page which records the name and situation of the writers, when we find that they will not only still number themselves among the followers of the Saviour of the world, but that to many of them is entrusted that solemn charge of educating the younger brethren, and to almost all is committed that still more solemn charge of feeding and watching over Christ's flock on earth, there would be no consolation for the Christian heart, were we not intimately persuaded that God has some great end in view, some great lesson to teach *, in allowing so dreadful a pest to infest this portion of his vineyard, and to threaten the destruction of all that is dear, sacred, and holy. Indeed we may perhaps observe

* I have given great offence to some of my German opponents, by representing their condition for the last sixty or seventy years as capable of affording a *warning*. But I am unable to discern that they have any real cause for offence. The fact that Rationalism has existed, in a very great degree, is now generally admitted, and I know of no one who deuiues its evil. Why then should it be offensive to say that the prevalence of so dreadful an evil among the Germans, ought to serve as a warning both to others and to themselves, and to pray that the warning may not be given in vain ?

that already one great end has been gained—that in the largest division of Lutheran Germany, the evil has been so strongly felt, and its cause so clearly discerned, that measures have been successfully taken for the introduction of a general liturgy, a point to which I shall recur towards the close of my work.

I now proceed to give some account of the tenets of this very remarkable school, without being solicitous to enquire whether the order in which I have arranged these opinions corresponds with the order of their rise and formation. In different minds that order was probably different, and what I am concerned to shew is the object which was aimed at, and how far that object was attained *. My alle-

* In the former edition of this work, I adopted nearly the reasoning as well as the arrangements of Tittman in his *Pragmatische Geschichte*. I was thus led to state, that the question of inspiration led, by necessary consequence, to the consideration of the credibility and the value of Scripture, that the system of historical interpretation flowed from the notions entertained on these points, and that the doctrine of accommodation which was involved in them led of necessity to an inquiry into the nature of Christianity. I am still inclined to believe that that order is a right and convenient one; but I am most anxious to escape from all farther controversy on the subject; and as they who cannot deny the facts stated under these several heads may still dispute the propriety of this method of connecting them, I have judged it better simply to

gation against the German Protestant Divines then is, that (from what causes I do not determine) the peculiar and positive doctrines of Christianity had lost all value in their eyes, and that they sought to depress Christianity itself to the level of a human invention, and its doctrines, at best, to a repetition of the doctrines of natural Religion. They had determined that reason was to possess not a *negative*, but a positive right of decision on all matters of belief; they had laid down, as I have before stated, what they considered as immutable principles of reason, and by the standard of those principles they proceeded to enquire into the pretensions of Christianity. Whether they examined the general notion of a Revelation, considered the nature of the Christian Revelation in particular, or enquired into its

state the facts. I am the more inclined too to this decision from a consideration of the following remarks of Staüdlin. He observes, before beginning his history of Rationalism in Christianity, that it is very easy to mistake effects and causes, and to look to causes which belong to other periods at least in a higher degree, without noticing the very effects which actually arose. Thus, some refer all the Rationalists' views of Christianity to their criticism and exegesis of the Bible, without considering that perhaps these very views led to that style of criticism. Some again rest on the progress of knowledge to explain them, while in other ages as great or greater light and knowledge have co-existed with a warm attachment to supernaturalism. Staüdlin Rat^s. und Sup^s. p. 284.

records in Scripture, their claims to inspiration, and to credibility, or their contents, the result of all these examinations was (as the result of any examination conducted on such principles must be) a determination that Christianity had little or no pretence to the character of a Divine Religion.

I shall begin with showing what were the opinions of the Rationalists with respect to the general notion of a Revelation. When these philosophers began to examine and criticise the old notion of a revelation, that is to say, information communicated by the immediate operation of God on the senses, they first expressed a doubt whether a revelation in that sense were possible, or rather, whether any possible evidence could prove it *. The impossibility of a reve-

* See Tittman's 18th section generally. Bahrdt (p. 16. note T. (says openly of his own party, the Rationalists, 'Dicunt, fieri quidem posse ut Deus veritates communicet, sed ex eo non sequi ut *immediate* id possit, nam *coſe* immediati et supernaturalis nullam esse homini notionem, ergo etiam certo dici non posse, utrum fieri possit an non. Deinde mysteriorum revelationem ideo repugnantem putant, quia mysteria sunt meræ formulæ, quæ ut formulæ quidem (per sonos a Deo prolatos) sed non ut objecta cogitationum communicari possunt.' Again in the next note, he says, that divine wisdom could not use any means which have not sure and certain marks of distinction from fraudulent or fanatical opinions; but immediate revelations have not such distinctions; therefore no immediate revelation can come from

lation was ground entirely untenable, even in the opinion of the most distinguished among infidel

God. See again, Reimarus 'Unmöglichkeit ein. offenbar. die alle Menschen—glauben können, in Lessing's Beiträge aus der Wolfenb. Biblioth. Part iv. Henke's Lineamenta Inst. fid. Christ. (2d ed. 1795.) p. 37, and N. Mag. vol. i. part iii. Herder (vom Geiste des Christenthums, p. 311.) says, that all ages have revelations, and that the setting a truth in a clearer light, is a revelation. Daub again, (in his Theologumena, Heidelb. 1806, p. 327.) asserts the constant instruction of mankind from God, in terms which clearly tend to set aside the necessity of any special revelation. See however, Löffler Magaz. für Prediger, vol. vii. part i. and his Kleine Schriften, vol. ii. p. 19. De Wette's Dogmatik der Evang. Luth. Kirche (2d ed. Berlin, 1821.) § 24. The gist of many of the arguments of the party, is the impossibility of any *proof* of the revelation. No supernatural events (as the orthodox call them) can prove it according to these writers; because no events can be *proved* to be supernatural. This is asserted even by Schleiermacher in an extract given below. Wegscheider says, that as the improved state of knowledge has explained many things from natural causes formerly supposed supernatural, the fair conclusion is, that all may finally be so explained. He quotes a very strong declaration to the same purpose, from *Planck*, Ueber die Haltbarkeit des historischen beweises für d. Göttlichkeit des Christenthums (Götteng. 1821.) p. 7. See Ammon. Summ. Theol. p. 35, and 'Von dem Ursprunge und der beschaffenheit einer unmittelbar göttlich. Offenbarung,' 1797. Staudlin's Dogmatik und Dogmen-geschichte, part i. p. 131. Perhaps one of the most elaborate remarks on the subject, is that in Wegscheider, p. 39. note [B] on chap. i. §. 11. of the Prolegomena.

writers. Lord Bolingbroke it is, I believe, who expressly says that this extraordinary action of God on the human mind, is no more inconceivable than the ordinary action of mind on body, or body on mind; and no man, when the question is pushed home to him, can be absurd enough to deny, that if God can so communicate with man, he can also show to conviction that such a communication has been held. I merely mention the opinion for the sake of showing that the notions, which even the unbeliever rejects, were inculcated, not merely by the believers, but by some of the modern teachers of religion in Germany. Afterwards however they seemed to content themselves with denying the necessity of a revelation. They were here encouraged, with respect to the Christian revelation in particular, by an imaginary victory which they gained. The elder divines of their church, seeing that it had pleased God to communicate to man a knowledge of his redemption, very impiously in fact, though not in intention, asserted that such a communication was *necessary* * to man's salvation—as if

* See Bahrdt, p. 17. Tittman, p. 217. These citations are however almost unnecessary. The opinion will be found in the works of all orthodox writers. On the one side see Töllner's Beweis dass Gött. die Menschen durch Seine offenbarung in der Natur zur Seligkeit führe, ch. i. p. 37. (1766.) and Eberhard's

the Saviour of the world could not have paid the price of man's sin, without informing man of his own happiness. When it was urged on them that there were in former ages, that there are still, and may be for many ages to come, men on whom the light of the Gospel has never shone, and that God, the holy and the just, will never condemn man for not knowing what it was physically impossible for him to know (an argument which does not in any degree apply to unbelief, where a knowledge of Christianity exists) instead of recognizing their error, they endeavoured to cover it by the doctrine of arbitrary decrees. They forgot that though indeed, as our Article says, men cannot be saved by their own sect or profession, that though we are taught that without the atonement of Christ no flesh could be saved, yet Scripture never limits, as they would, the extent of that atonement; nor says to what ages, to how many, and in how many different ways the merits of that blessed sacrifice may be applied. Over these errors of some of the early divines it was easy to triumph, and thence to draw inferences as to revelations in general; it was easy to show that in this sense there was no necessity for revelation, or in other words, that God could save man without informing man that he was

great work, the *Neue Apologie des Sokrates*. 3d. ed. at Berlin in 2 vols. 1788.) as to what is said afterwards on arbitrary decrees, see *Ernesti Vindiciæ Arb. Div.*

saved ; but the argument was most dishonest, and was built entirely on the ambiguous use of the word *necessity* ; for the rationalizing divines never touched the real question, never disproved the necessity of revelation in the proper sense of the word. They asserted indeed with the infidel, but they never disproved, they never could disprove in the face of truth and reason, that unless God sends light to enlighten man, he has no natural power effectually to overcome the evil which reigns within him, or to escape from the gross and polluting darkness of ignorance, sensuality and sin ; and they never disproved that with the probability that God desires to correct and improve his creatures, and so to make them happy, there arises a corresponding necessity for a revelation from him. With the dishonesty of the infidel they borrow a sublime and lofty morality from Christianity, they assert that all they possess comes from the light of nature, and thence alone they deduce their inference that a revelation is not necessary. It was asserted indeed by some that a revelation, so far from being necessary, would at best be only one of a chain of means used by Providence for the gradual education of mankind. In that scheme of gradation there must obviously be many steps *, and at each of them

* The two principal works are Lessing's *Erziehung des Menschengeschlecht's* and Rosenmüller *Ueber die Stufenfolge der Göttlichen Offenbarungen*, 1779. See also E. G. Schmidt's

Providence would supply the means necessary for higher knowledge. The instruction communicated from one individual or one nation to others would be such a means ; it might therefore be called a revelation, and in future times, as necessity arose, there might arise more such revelations. Providence was so far concerned in the business, as through natural causes to bring about this communication of instruction, to provide, that is to say, by the mediate agency of the various relations of individuals and nations, that the truths of natural religion should be sent from those who had them, to those who had them not, but no farther than this—no immediate agency was supposed in any case of revelation, but was held to be neither conceivable nor credible. Such were the notions entertained by the Rationalists as to revelation in general. Before I can explain very clearly their opinions on the Christian revelation in particular, I must notice the various assertions and opinions which were maintained as to its record in Scripture.

First I may mention that by many of those who undertook to inquire into the authenticity and genuineness of the books of Scripture, it was determined ' that a great part of these books were spurious,

Lehrbuch d. Christl. Dogmatik (Giessen. 1800.) or an account of it in Schröckh viii. p. 78.

supposititious and interpolated *; that the Gospels

* The following particulars of the parts of both Testaments, which have been attacked by the German divines, may be convenient though I fear it is defective. With respect to the Old Testament, we find many of them rejecting it altogether as a source of religious knowledge. Schröckh (viii. p. 50,) gives an account of a work of Hufnagel, called 'Die Schriften des Alten Testaments,' (printed at Erlangen in 1785,) written expressly to expose the Old Testament, and designed, as the amiable writer mentions in the title page, for readers of *all classes*. Many of these writers, as Vater (Commentar uber den Pentateuch 3 Parts, 1802—5. vol. iii. 391), De Wette (Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Alt. Test. II. vol. Hall. 1806, 7. Einleitung in die Kanon. und Apokr. Bücher des A. Test. (Berl. 1822.) p. 228.) Gesenius * (Geschichte der Hebr. Sprache und Schrift, p. 23—31, and Commentat. de Pentateuch. Samarit. p. 6.), Wegscheider, (Instit. Theol. Christ. p. 118.) and others accede to Aben Ezra's notion of the Pentateuch not being the work of Moses. Wegscheider says that Eichhorn, Jahn and Rosenmüller †, think that the greatest part was the work of Moses. He refers to the new edition of Rosenmüller, which I have not seen; but I would recommend the perusal of Rosenmüller's remarks on the subject in the older edition, to those who wish to form an idea of the

* It is well known to Hebrew scholars that many of Gesenius's statements with respect to the language of the Old Testament, leading to certain highly important conclusions are *not founded in fact*. I have reason to believe that he is aware of this also himself, and that he has expressed his intention of altering them in a second edition. Where errors affect the evidence of religion, these second editions cannot come forth too soon.

† I ought to have noticed that the work here alluded to on the *Old Testament* is by the younger Rosenmüller, that on the New by his father. I imagined that this was so well known as not to require notice, but I take this opportunity of mentioning the matter as the deficiency was noted in a very courteous article in the *Evang. Magazine* for April, 1826.

did not proceed from the authors whose names they

tranchant method in which this class of German writers treats these questions. In about half a dozen pages, he disposes of the question by assertions and probabilities, in opposition to the un-deviating testimony of ages and generations, and the opinion of all the elder divines, with the exception of Simon and Le Clerc, who himself retracted in the more matured exercise of his judgment*. Any thing more nugatory than Rosenmüller's reasonings, especially his adoption of Astruc's theory of a double document, I never read. See Bishop Blomfield's note, p. 122. of his Dissertation on the Traditional knowledge of a Redeemer, Camb. 1819. These writers do not agree to what age to refer the Pentateuch; some say to Ezra, others to a far earlier age. The notion as to Ezra's age, which Rosenmüller adopts on the ground of the exact *similarity* of the style to that of Ezra and Nehemiah, is positively rejected, and with contempt, by Döderlein, *on the ground of their difference*. (Inst. Theol. Christ. I. p. 132. chap. iii. tom. II. § 38.) Döderlein, however, and others, who think the Pentateuch the work of Moses, allow only the Law to be divine. The rest they think made up of mythi, family pedigrees, rhapsodies in memory of illustrious men and things, and note books or memoirs of the religion of the founders of the nation. This they think clear from Numbers xxi. 26. 57, and from the diversity of style, &c. See Döderlein *ubi supra*, p. 141. § 39. and

* Observing again that I speak only of the second edition, I must add to my former remarks that Rosenmüller's work on the Old Testament is a very poor performance. I have lately read with a good deal of care his Commentary on the Mosaic Law, and can safely say it is most defective. As examples, let any one examine his note on Exodus xxi. 2. on the slavery of Jews. He says nothing elsewhere on the subject, and leaves the difficult question raised by a comparison of that place and Lev. xxv. 39. untouched. Again, he says not one word on Lev. xx. 18. compared with xv. 24. Bishop Patrick's commentary, though not making such professions of learning is in fact a more *learned* as well as more useful work.

bore, or at least that those authors had little concern

Bauer's edition of Glass's *Philologia Sacra*, tom. II. Sect. 2. p. 367. The reader, who has patience and curiosity, may refer to Eichhorn's *Repertorium*, Parts IV. and V. for some articles on the books of Moses, especially one called *Urgeschichte*. He will find there too a pleasing speculation of Rosenmüller's on the Fall. He says, that it is only a sort of translation of an ancient historical painting (such as were in use before the invention of letters) into language. (Part V. p. 158—185. Professor Herbst of Tübingen adopts a middle theory, conceiving that the Law and the greater part of the history were written by Moses, but in fragments, and that the Pentateuch was arranged by Ezra. His proofs are derived from the repetitions both in the Law and Historical part and the alleged contradictions between parts of the history. The first appears to be an argument of little weight, and the instances which he alleged under the second head have been I think satisfactorily explained by many writers. His dissertation is printed in the *Commentationes Theologicæ*. vol. I. part I. p. 1. Leips. 1825. Generally, the authors of *all* the historical books and of Job are unknown, (Wegscheider, p. 117.) and they were compiled from public monuments, and acts and memoirs, so that it would be absurd to speak of their being inspired. (Döderlein, p. 142. Bauer, p. 367.) The principal aim of their authors was to insist on the external observation of the Law, and to trace every misfortune to some neglect of it (Bauer, p. 369.) 'That the historical credit of the books of Chronicles is very doubtful,' says Wegscheider (p. 119.) with great coolness, 'has been lately demonstrated by Gramberg (*Die Chronik nach ihrem Gesch. Charakter und ihrer Glaubwürdigkeit geprüft*. Hall. 1823.) after De Wette (*Beiträge zur Einleitung in das A. T. I.*); they have been defended by Dahler (*De Libror. Paraleip. auctor. et fide Histor. Argent. 1819.*) Vogel of Halle, as I learn from Schröckh,

in them, and that many of the Epistles likewise were spurious *.

* Staudlin *Gesch. d. Rat^s. und Supernat^s.* p. 296.

vol. VIII. p. 390, rejected Esther, the Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the nine last chapters of Ezekiel, principally because they are not referred to in the New Testament. For Michaelis's suspicions see the *Orientalische Bibliothek*. P. II. p. 1.

With regard to the prophecies, it will be seen from Rosenmüller's commentary on Isaiah, (Part III. vol. i. p. 4, and p. 459.) that he considers that book as made up by one writer out of the minor works of several *, which is also the opinion of Eichhorn and many others. See also Gesenius *Commentar. über d. Jesaia*, vol. I. Leips. 1821. and De Wette's *Einleitung*, p. 286. From Rosenmüller also, on chap. ix. of Zechariah, or Bertholdt's *Isag. Histor. Crit. in Vet. Test.* Part IV. p. 1707. No. I. or De Wette *ubi supra*, p. 337. it appears that many maintain that all of that book after chap. viii. is not the work of Zechariah. Jonah, which Rosenmüller takes to be the mere repetition of the Mythos of Hercules swallowed by the sea monster, he says was not written by Jonah, but by some one who was contemporary with Jeremiah. See *Ros.* Part VII. vol. II. p. 359. I see also by Wegscheider that the book of Daniel is not ascribed to that Prophet. He refers to Bertholdt's 'Daniel aus dem Hebr. aramäischen neu übersetzt,' 2 Parts. Erlangen. 1806. The rest of the Prophecies are, I believe, allowed to be the work of those whose names they bear. But many after Eichhorn deny that the Prophets enjoyed any supernatural revelation, and say that they were very clever and experienced men, likely from their abilities to foresee future events, and that from their purity of manners they were used as instru-

* See my reply to the charge made against me with respect to Rosenmüller in the Appendix to this work (1828), p. 16—19.

Although almost all of the distinguished Rational-

ments of Providence to check a guilty age. See Döderlein I. p.146. Eichhorn *Einleitung in das A. T.* Part III. In mentioning Eichhorn, I must be allowed to make a few remarks on his Introduction to the Old Testament. It is a work written with the intention of applying the principles, by which Heyne and his school had explained the Greek mythology, sometimes openly and sometimes covertly, to every thing in Hebrew antiquity. It is justly observed (in the *Archives du Christ.* 7th year, No. IX. p. 396. note) that the art and the apparatus of learning used to bring down every thing to a lower level, hide the weak, base, and purely conjectural nature of the materials of the book. In Germany, Jahn, Meyer in his *Hermeneutica*, Kelle, many writers in the magazines of Flatt, Süskind, and Bengel, and even Gesenius, have attacked almost every one of Eichhorn's positions, and have shewn how often he has been the dupe of his imagination, and how frequently he has avoided giving proofs of his opinions. It is singular that in his lectures (see the same work p. 399.) he has himself confessed that the orthodox interpretations are in perfect conformity with the text.

With respect to the New Testament, I believe I need hardly go into any detail. Most of my readers are acquainted, for example, with the various schemes proposed to take away all notion of independent authorship in the case of the Gospels. They are well detailed in the Preface to the Translation of Schleiermacher's work on St. Luke. Bretschneider published (in 1820) a book called '*Probabilia de Evangelio et Epistolarum Johannis Apostoli indole et origine*,' in which he brought together all the doubts he could find as to the authenticity of St. John's Gospel. Mr. Pusey mentions (p. 155) that fourteen answers to it appeared. Bretschneider professes himself quite satisfied now, and very quietly says, that his only wish in publishing his volume

ists reject, I believe, more or less of Scripture on such grounds as these, yet all but a few seem to have imagined that a large portion of the books of Scripture were either genuine, or had been received as genuine from the earliest times. To ascertain the nature of the religion, it was therefore necessary that these books should be examined. To those who are accustomed to think of Scripture as given by inspiration of God, it will be most interesting first to know what the Rationalists, in their career of innovation, laid down as truth with regard to the doctrine of inspiration.

It is only justice to say that the consideration of this first question was not forbidden by any declaration of their churches *. At least none of the con-

was to bring the question to an issue. See my 'Letter to the Bishop of London.' Ammon imagines that one person wrote this Gospel and another published it, introducing some new matter. (*Programma quo docetur Joannem, Evang. auctorem, ab editore hujus libri fuisse diversum. Erlangen. 1811.*)

Eichhorn (*Einleitung* III. p. 315) attacks the two Epistles to Timothy and that to Titus; and Schleiermacher has attacked the first to Timothy (*Ueber d. Sogenannten ersten brief des Paulus an den Timoth. Berl. 1807.*)

* The strongest expressions perhaps are to be found in the Confession. Art. vii. de abus. p. 42. 44. and the Apology. Præf. 48. Art. ii. 81. ed. Rechenb. Artic. Smalcald. Part ii. Art. ii. p. 308. Part iii. Art. viii. p. 333. Form. Concord. Sol. decl. Præf. 635. These are pointed out by Wegscheider, p. 134.

fessions of faith which I have seen, lay down any express doctrine on inspiration, nor do there seem to be any very precise notions on the subject in the casual expressions which relate to it in the defence of the Confession of Augsburgh. The first step was to renounce the unnecessary * hypothesis of an in-

* This was the old theory. See Athenagoras Legat. pro Christian. p. 32. et 36. ed. Ox. 1706. Justin Martyr Coh. ad Græc. p. 9. ed. Ox. So most of the early dogmatical writers. Döderlein (Instit. Theol. Christ. i. p. 101.) mentions a book of Schubert, Abhandlung von der heilig. Schrift und deren Canon, as late as 1774. maintaining the same opinions. Ernesti (in an article in the Theolog. Bibl. vol. iii. p. 446. on a work called, Briefe über die Mosaischen Schriften und Philosophie) has some very admirable remarks on this subject. He says (p. 469.) that however we may be content to depend on human writers, in human matters, yet in divine ones containing rules of faith and life, and written by men unused to composition, not possessing the ability which would enable them perhaps to explain themselves with the necessary clearness, or to express themselves so that the reader should think of nothing more nor less, nor other than they did, and not writing in a language they had learned by rule, we cannot be content to depend on mere human strength. For it is harder to write accurately, than to think rightly, a truth very conspicuous in the writings of philosophers, who so often fail to express their own meaning with accuracy. He concludes, that in the actual writing, the apostles were therefore assisted immediately by the Holy Spirit, the choice and order of matter pointed out, and the necessary accuracy and certainty given; and that otherwise, their writings could not properly be proposed as a rule of faith and life.

spiration extended to every word and letter in Scripture. But after proposing a variety of theories as to the various ranks * and degrees of inspiration,

* On this point there is a curious book of Töllner, called, 'Die Göttliche Eingebung der Heilige Schrift.' Linden et Leipsic, 1771. Töllner was a teacher of divinity at Frankfort on the Oder. His book was reviewed by Ernesti in the *Neueste Theol. Bibl.* vol. ii. p. 31. Of Töllner's notions on the practical part of Christianity, there is a sufficient account in Stäudlin's *Geschichte der Christ. Moral.* p. 763, and following; and it thence appears that Töllner considered that the will, the matter, the words, and the order of both the matter and the words, might be objects of inspiration—that there were four degrees, (1) when the inspiration extended to all of them, (2) when to some of them only, (3) when all were partly under natural, partly under supernatural guidance, (4) when some were under natural guidance only, the others under partly natural, and partly supernatural. Some books he thinks written without any inspiration, and only confirmed by God (p. 50.); in the Old Testament he thinks Moses might have been directed to a choice of his subjects, and his memory might have been strengthened—and so of the Psalms and Prophecies. In the historical books he allows no inspiration. What degree exists in the New Testament, he cannot decide. In the Acts, there was a mediate and natural inspiration. In St. Mark's case, an immediate inspiration is improbable, as he adds little to St. Matthew, and the disproportion of the first and second parts of his Gospel betrays an human composer. St. Luke and Mark were, however, approved of by the inspired apostles, which is enough to give due authority to their writings. Others make three degrees of inspiration, an antecedent, concomitant, and consequent; by which, respectively, unknown facts are com-

after accepting for a moment the reasonable belief, that * although the supposition of an immediate supernatural agency at every instant is superfluous, God who had appointed the apostles to teach Christianity, enabled them by the help of his Spirit to teach it rightly, and to avoid error and falsehood, this belief too was given up, and it was determined that all notion of an immediate agency was to be rejected on some strange physical and psychological grounds †,

municated, errors are avoided in those the writers already knew, and human works are pronounced to be true. See Döderlein *Inst. Theol. Christ. I.* p. 102. and Quenstedt. *Theol. Did. Pol. i.* 70. The last answers to Töllner's notion of *confirmation*. The reader will find more such distinctions in Gerhard's *Loci Theologici ii.* 26. Hollaz *Examen Theol. ed. Teller.* 74. and Dannhauer's *Hodosophia*, 34. Wegscheider says, that Luther also thought there were degrees of inspiration, and refers to the preface to the German translation of the New Testament, 1524, and to that of the Epistle of St. James in his Works, xiv. 104. 149. as also to Bretschneider's work, 'Luther an unsere Zeit.' (Erlang. 1817.) to Krause *Opusc. Theoll.* 207, to a passage in Luther's works, ii. 140, and to Plank's *Geschichte d. Entstehung und bildung des Protest. Lehrbegriff.* vol. ii. 97.

* 'Morus,' says Schröckh (VIII. p. 59) 'taught that inspiration was sometimes only the inducing to write; sometimes an admonition to do so; sometimes revelation; sometimes only a guarding from error.'

† See Tittman's *Pragmat. Geschichte*, (1824.) p. 192. There are indeed some extraordinary arguments to be found on this subject, in all the rationalist writers. I have noticed below one

that it was repugnant to reason *, that it was irre-

statement; namely, that 'the doctrine of inspiration supposes the Deity and the nature of the human mind to be *spirabilis*.'

* I abridge the objections to it from Wegscheider, p. 145, and following. 'The various notions of supernatural revelation in Scripture, must be referred to the *mystic* narrations and notions of all barbarous people, and explained by the known laws of nature. As to any appearance of God *, it is expressly denied, John i. 18. 1 John iv. 12. Visions of angels, and narrations about demons, are destitute of all grounds of history—and the names, &c. given to angels betray a Jewish origin, while the business attributed to them (as Gen. xviii. xxxii. 1.) is unworthy of them. The voices said to be heard from heaven, are generally to be explained by thunder. (This is a very common doctrine, and is even taught by Schleusner, v. φωνή.) Dreams and visions are best explained by psychology, and have no marks of truth. Finally, the notion of a divine inspiration is repugnant to the idea of a perfect spirit, and entirely takes away the intellectual and moral liberty and dignity of man; it must be explained from the disposition of a rude age, which attributes every thing out of the common way, even any unusual excitement of mind, to the Deity. There is a *petitio principii* in all the orthodox arguments. For the orthodox require us to believe in the divinity of revelation, because it is contained in an inspired book, and then require us to believe in the inspiration of the book, because it contains the history of a divine revelation †. Again, other animals can attain their pro-

* All these sentiments of Wegscheider, as to the natural explanations of the visions, dreams, voices, &c. in the New Testament, are held by Ammon. (See Summ. Theol. Christ. p. 24.) and they are noticed by Schröckh vii. p. 630. and viii. p. 309.

† Plank (Geschichte des Christenthums. Gottingen, 1818. Pref. p. xi.) answers to this, that the apostles as mere human writers, may be allowed to bear testimony to the divinity of Christianity, and that from that divinity, their in-

conciliable both with the freedom of the writers,

per ends (this is a very favourite argument) without extraordinary assistance, why should we think man alone unable to attain the end of his existence (viz. to be the moral and religious) without such assistance? Farther, it is clear, that the Scriptures cannot be inspired, from the differences in style, the different sources, whence it is derived (Numb. xxi. 14. Josh. x. 13.) the chronological difficulties, and the differences in doctrine*, from its containing an argument often ambiguously and obscurely expressed and amended, or still to be amended †, in process of time, and of such a nature, as to be manifestly within the power of human faculties ‡. Besides, many of the books were not ac-

spiration may be proved. But, says Wegscheider, if we consider the evangelists as human writers, we may examine their narrations, like those of any other people. It would be unjust to assert the existence of mythi in other writers, and allow all the evangelists say to be true. All antiquity is bound together by very close ties, and cannot be understood, unless the same sort of events and histories in different nations, are judged of in the same way, and sacred and profane history are weighed with the same balance.

* Christ in the three first Gospels is very different from the picture drawn by St. John (See Herder Vom Sohn Gottes. p. 177.) especially in his conversations and sentiments. See Gurlitt. *Lectionum in Novum Testamentum Specimen* iv. Hamb. 1805. *Briefe über den Rationalismus*, p. 325. De Wette über Religion und Theologie, p. 178. Bretschneider *Probabilia de Evang. et Epp. Joann. indole* (Leips. 1820.) p. l. sq. Generally, see Thurn *Sammlung abweichender Vorstellungen der N. T. Schriftsteller üb. einen und denselbe Gegenstand*. Leips. 1805. The same sentiments are expressed by Ammon *Summ. Theol. Christ.* §2.

† 'The supposition made by some persons that God in revelation and inspiration, so accommodated himself to the understanding of uncivilized men, as to teach them even false opinions for a time, is entirely repugnant to every idea of a wise and true Deity. Another supposition, that inspiration only extends to divine things, and that we ought to separate from it the many errors found in Scripture, as to geology, astronomy, &c. is untenable, as some of those errors are connected with religious matters, (Josh. x. 12, 13. 2 Cor. xii. 2.) and God, if he gave any inspiration, would not sanction any error.' *Wegsch. abridged.*

‡ 'Many points supposed to be due to inspiration alone, have been found among nations, where no inspiration is thought of, as circumcision among the Ethiopians, the notion about the devil among the Parsees, the incarnation in India, the resurrection among the Chaldees, Americans, &c.' *Wegsch. abridged.*

and the quality of their works, and moreover that it

tually written by those, whose names they bear, but by amanuenses, of whose inspiration nothing is known. Again, if inspiration were necessary, interpreters would be inspired, as the Scripture is certainly often obscure.' (This remark deserves attention, as it shews the wretched style of reasoning of the Rationalist party, and the miserably confined views which they take of the nature of a revelation. See Butler's Analogy, Part II. chap. iii., a work, by the side of which the attempts made by the Rationalists at what they call reasoning, sink at once to their proper level.) The revelation to which the Jewish and Christian religions are referred, may be fairly reckoned a natural, and mediate one, such that the authors of these two forms may be said to have been excited by Providence, acting by natural means, to give better notions of religion. Then the ancients commonly spoke of any peculiar gift of genius, especially when attended with fervour of mind, and of any remarkable events, simply as the works of the Deity, and so the authors of a religion might appear to themselves to speak from God, and claim the title of messengers of God, without impropriety, inasmuch as they spoke what was worthy of God, the author of truth, and true religion.' Wegscheider, (p. 156.) in a note on this point, gives the following strange explanation of John vii. 17. 'If any man will do his will.' 'Jesus ipse (Joh. vii. 17.) doctrinam, quam tradidit, divinam esse professus est, quatenus divina ejus indoles ab homine vere religioso proboque bene cognosci potest atque dijudicari.' Döderlein * certainly holds *some-what* higher notions of inspiration than these. He tells us, that

* The sentiments of Henke, Eckerman (Theolog. Beiträge ii. S. 2.), and Tieftrunk (Censur des Prot. Lehrbeg. Berlin, 1791.) are mentioned by Döderlein, i. p. 106. as exactly in unison with those just transcribed from Wegscheider, that is to say, as entirely denying all supernatural inspiration.

admitted of no imaginable proof. When the decla-

as all antiquity ascribes the books of Scripture to the apostles, who were commissioned to teach this divine religion, and had a promise of the help of the Spirit, every thing of a religious nature must be referred to the Holy Spirit, and as the institution is divine, the books may be reckoned so. But then, nothing but the religious parts of them can be so thought of; and for those parts, it is enough to consider them as sacred, as being the fount of salutary truth, without being too definite, as to the way in which they became divine. He adds, that it is very common to say of any persons, especially poets *, whose sentiments and discourses, show high excitement, that they are inspired, and after considering the passages usually alleged to prove inspiration, proceeds to show how difficult it would have been for the apostles to err, even without any superhuman aid. (See Ernesti's admirable remarks above.) But Döderlein varies, as he afterwards says, that God preserved the memory of the apostles, when writing of Jesus, gave them a new revelation, if need was, and an honest heart,

* This is a very favourite notion. I have quoted the words of Henke below, and in Wegscheider we have a long passage to show, that the Jews like other ancient nations did not discriminate between inspiration and poetic enthusiasm, that in the second century only after Christ, they began to talk of the inspiration of the Old Testament, and that *then* the ancient doctors of the church took up the same notions as to the New Testament. In his note, he cites a vast number of passages from Greek and Roman writers, to show, that they spoke of poets as *inspired*, and from other writers, to show that the eastern nations did the same. At the end of Bauer's edition of Glasse's *Philologia Sacra*, Bauer gives a dissertation on the mythi of the Bible, and tells us that much error has arisen from supposing, that the prophecies (instead of being as they are, the works of men in a state of poetic furor, uttering their own complaints of their destiny, or thanking God for the mercies he had shown them) contain dogmatical notions, introduce Christ as speaking, and describe his death, &c. See Glass. *Philol. Sacr.* (ed. Dath. et Bauer.) ii. §. 2. p. 390. In fact, however, Wegscheider goes farther than all this, when he tells us in note [A] on §. 8. that all legislators have boasted of a divine influence, as Minos, Zoroaster, the founders of the Brachman, Sabæan, and other religions.

rations of Scripture were urged on them, when it was said that Christ had promised to send a Comforter who should guide his disciples into all truth, and abide with them for ever, when it was shown that the apostles themselves * said that they spoke not

when writing of themselves. And he adds, that *where* God did inspire the Sacred Writers, he thinks it must have been with words, as well as things, as he holds the last impossible without the first; and besides, as one great object was to enable the apostles to spread the new religion clearly, it is surely probable, that the Spirit would have declared the truths of religion in such words as they could most clearly comprehend, and so best transmit to others. Döderlein—(Instit. Theol. Christ. i. p. 89—106.) Ammon (Summa Theol. Christ. p. 22.) has the following observations. He thinks that some of the more recent writers have been too violent, because Jesus so constantly asserts his divine mission, and because the idea of a mediate divine instruction is applicable to all human knowledge, and does not admit the notion peculiar to revelation. It is easy, however, he adds, to answer the believers in Θεοπνευστία (quotquot supersunt adhuc) that the peculiar notion of inspiration cannot be applied without great moral inconvenience to the human mind, (for it is not only ‘numinis et mentis humanæ naturam spirabilem esse innuit’ (the expression is the same as Wegscheider’s, p. 149.) but takes away all man’s intellectual and moral liberty);—that the Sacred Writers never refer the divine instinct, with which they professed to be seized, to *prose discourse*, much less to *writing*, but merely *oracles*;—that the diversity of style, &c. &c. shows that they were much left to their own device.

* In some of the passages alluded to, (Luke i. 3. 1 Cor. vii. 10. 2 Cor. xi. 17.) the writers, according to Wegscheider, only

with the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth—and when the several passages in St. Paul's writings were adduced, which by distinguishing between his own opinions and those which he delivered by commandment, point out assuredly something not to be found within the mind of man, as occasionally acting on his; the reply was, that no proof could be given that these expressions were to be understood of a supernatural assistance, or (to use the words of Henke * the pro-

claim the use of their own powers of mind; in 1 Cor. ii. 13. 2 Pet. i. 21. they refer only to the prophecies, when they speak of the divine instinct, which they do not define; in others, they recommend a trial of those, who are acted on by the divine Spirit, as 1 John iv. 1. comp. Gal. ii. 6. 1 Cor. x. 15. xiv. 29; in 2 Tim. iii. 16. nothing is said farther, than that every book written under the influence of the divine Spirit, is equally good for teaching and improving mankind; and in 2 Pet. i. 21. (a writing not universally admitted) there is no mention of any book. So far Wegscheider, p. 150—152.

* In his 'Lineamenta.' In this work the author is especially anxious to give a warning against three kinds of superstition, viz. Christolatry, by which all religion is referred to the honouring of Christ; Bibliolatry, or an unreasonable respect for the Bible, as if it contained any wonderful mysteries, or was fit for all periods; and Onomatolatry, or too great dependence on dogmatic formulæ and words. Christ was a distinguished teacher, directed by God; the name *Son of God* has nothing to do with his nature but his qualities; it is possible that by a Prosopopœa, the Holy Ghost may be spoken of as a person; and Divine qualities no doubt are

fessor of divinity at Helmstadt) in any higher sense than the expressions of Cicero as to the inspiration of the poets, or those of Quintilian respecting Plato, as it appeared from the use of words in Scripture, that the writers made no accurate distinction between immediate * and mediate agency. Certainly no proof can be given which is not to be found in the clear import of the words themselves; there are some things too clear to be proved by any thing but a statement of their clearness; some too absurd to be disproved except by a statement of their absurdity. It is not a little curious indeed to observe the inconsistency of that class of the German innovators which did not entirely reject the belief that Christianity was a Divine religion, but yet wished to stand well with the public by discarding all antiquated prejudices, and appealing as loudly as others to the decision of reason. These persons, if they supposed the Deity to have had any *immediate* concern in Christianity, could not in decency deny that the Sacred Writers were so far under his protection and assist-

attributed to him because he is identical with God. The merit of Christ is his doctrine, &c. &c.

* See Wegscheider, § 12. Döderlein Instit. Theol. I. p. 105. Bahrdt, pp. 42. and 44. notes S et X. Eckermann's Theol. Beiträge II. part i. ii. Henke's Lineam. Inst. fidei. Christianæ, § 14. Ammon. Wissensch. Prakt. Theol. p. 43. Summa Theol. Christ. § 10—12. Tieftrunk's Censur des Protest. Lehrbeg. I. p. 327.

ance as to be saved from error: yet they vehemently rejected all notions of supernatural agency *. If, however, the authors of the books of Scripture were enabled to do what unassisted man with his utmost diligence and love of truth could not effect, to what purpose is it to contend that this assistance was mediate and not immediate? if they were not enabled to do more than other men, what assistance could they be said to derive from the Deity, in any proper sense of the word?

Having shewn how the question of inspiration was

* The error of those rationalizing divines to whom I allude, in reasoning on this subject, appears to me to arise from their overlooking the distinction between *the means*, and *the end*. In speaking generally of any work effected by God's providence, it is easy to see, that it is *in the means* alone that we can distinguish between *mediate* and *immediate*. Thus the punishment of a guilty city might be effected either by natural or supernatural means; as, for example, by fire from heaven; or by the hands of hostile nations, which might be excited to the work by Providence, acting, however, through common and natural means—but in the thing itself, in the destruction of buildings, and in the death of human beings, there is nothing of an extraordinary nature. In the case of inspiration, on the contrary, it is the *end* alone about which we need dispute; for it is obviously out of the ordinary course of nature, that men should be saved from error and mistake—that of itself is sufficient to establish a supernatural agency—and if that be allowed, we need hardly dispute whether the means used to effect a purpose *allowed to be supernatural*, were themselves ordinary or extraordinary.

disposed of by the Rationalists, I will now proceed to give a sketch of their arguments as to the *credibility* of Scripture. For if a sacred historian *has* only his own strength to depend on, yet if he is both willing and able to relate events as they happened, he is entitled to at least as much credit as the historian of war or of civil transactions. They certainly who wish to reduce Christianity to the level of a human invention, or of natural religion, cannot very well maintain their argument if the credibility of Scripture remains untouched. We find, accordingly, that the Rationalists, in their wish to impugn it, in general assumed the hypothesis of a pious fraud, or deception * practised by the apostles from good mo-

* I recommend the perusal of Tittman's 17th section, pp. 198, and following. Wegscheider, § 26. and Hauff Bemerkungen über die Lehrart Jesu, Offenb. 1798. Wegscheider (§ 44. note B.) rather defends Christ and his apostles from the charge of deception, by saying, that they only adopted a common notion of their age, in attributing any peculiar feelings or effects to God. The strongest work, I think, on the deception, is Bahrdt's 'Briefe über die Bibel in Volkston.' On all this part of the question, subsequent writers took much from the Fragments which Lessing published, and which were written by Reimarus. I should recommend Reinhard's admirable work, called Versuch über den Plan welchen der Stifter der Christ. Religion zum besten der Menschheit entwarf *. (4th ed. Wittemberg. 1791.)

* The Rationalist party seem often to consider Christianity as only a re-edition of what is excellent in other systems, and it is against this that Reinhard's book is directed. The notion seems little more than a renewal of Ammonius's theory. See Mosh. de rebus Christ. ante Const. § 28. Indeed the whole spirit of the Rationalists is quite that of Ammonius, § 32.

tives. They supposed that the founders of the Christian religion, in order to introduce a better and more wholesome moral system, and gain attention and weight for it among the people, allowed themselves to give many circumstances a different dress from their true one. Armed with this hypothesis, they could obviously reject every thing which they disliked in Scripture, without appearing openly to attack the character of the apostles—they could change the whole into a fable, of which every man might believe as much or as little as he pleased. If these writers really meant no more than their words convey, it did little honour to their sense of morality that they continued the profession of a religion founded on deceit; if they meant to get rid of it, their proceedings may do more credit to their understanding, for its rejection by every man who loved truth and honesty, was the necessary consequence of the admission of their hypothesis. It would be disgusting to go through all the strange fancies which were set afloat, and which tended only to set Scripture on the same footing as an ingenious but improbable for an account and refutation of all this mischief. It is noticed in Ammon's *Vollständ. Lehrbuch der Christ.-Relig. Moral.* (Götting. 1806.) § 85. and has been well translated into French by M. Dumas, under the title *Essai sur le plan formé par le fondateur de la Religion Chretienne pour le bonheur du genre humain.* (Dresden, 1799.) Döderlein (*Inst. Theol. Christ.* p. 34.) defends the apostles, that is, he proves their *wish* to tell all as it really happened, from their excellent characters, &c.

romance. They all proceeded from the determination that whatever was not intelligible *, was incredible ; that only what was of familiar and easy explanation deserved belief, and that all which was miraculous and mysterious in Scripture must be rejected, and they rested perpetually on notions and reasonings, which were in themselves miracles of incredibility. But there were many of the German divines of this Rationalist period who went much farther, and who impute a deception to our Lord and his Apostles, not for good, but for evil purposes †. In reading or

* Eckermann's Theolog. Beiträge, vol. v. part ii. I would refer too for similar notions, to Wegscheider, § 9—11. and note C. on § 51.

† ' Reimarus,' says Staüdlin, ' attacked the character of Jesus Christ, and accused him of rebellious, ambitious, and political views.' Though he allowed that our Lord taught an excellent and reasonable system of morality and religion, he contended that its introduction was not the main object, but that it was used as a cloak for political designs. It is very true, as I have been often reminded, that Reimarus might not have been a divine, but many of his followers were. Let my opponents hear Staüdlin in continuation. ' Afterwards came out *writings enough* in Germany, in which Christ was said to have performed his miracles by secret arts or by delusions, all proofs for the truth and divinity of his religion were taken away ; he was exhibited either as a *deceiver* or self-deceiving enthusiast, and every possible objection to Christian morality as well as the form of Christian worship were brought together. Among the writers of these works were even theologians and preachers ! What could be the conse-

in hearing of these wretched productions, the mind is divided between disgust at folly, and indignation at wickedness. What can be said for the heart which could suppose that the founders of Christianity could have taught the sublime and holy doctrines of the Gospel with a lie in their hearts and on their lips? or for the intellect which could believe that ambitious and designing men would encounter years of poverty and shame and danger with no prospect but the prospect of an ignominious death?

But there is another question intimately connected with this, I mean the value of Scripture, even on supposition that the writers were honest and good men, incapable of entertaining any intention of either pious or impious fraud. That question is, how far they had the *power* of distinguishing between truth and falsehood, and how far they were liable to error from ignorance, or from enthusiasm, or from human frailty? Into this question the Rationalists of course fully entered, and decided that the apostles, as low and ignorant men, born in an almost barbarous country, and at a period when the intellect was

quence, except that they who still held somewhat to Christianity, should set it forth as pure Rationalism, and that others should endeavour to extinguish it, and to introduce a pure religion of reason, quite independent on, and separated from, Christianity?' Staüdlin *Gesch. der Rat^s. und Sup^s.* p. 291.

not duly cultivated, had not even the power * of relating every thing as it really happened. Nothing can shew more clearly that the innovators, whatever were their professions, had, in fact, no belief that Christianity in any way whatever came from God, than their arguments in this part of their career. If a religion is really sent into the world by God, and if they who are to teach it cannot be safe from error without assistance from God, the obvious inference is, that they would receive that necessary assistance. But these divines, while in words they allowed at this time that the religion was sent from God †, while they could not but allow also that the first propagators of it, if mere unassisted men, must have been liable to mistake or error, rejected the natural inference, and made another, namely, that as there was reason to suspect the writers of error, the only method of getting at truth, was to subject what they had written ‡ to a critical examination, to separate

* See Tittman, p. 205.

† This was merely allowed on the ground that whatever was right comes from God. See Ammon's *Vollst. Lehrb. der Christlich-Relig. Moral.* § 88. His quotation at the end is from *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. i. 26.* 'Philosophia, omnium artium mater, quid est aliud, nisi, ut Plato ait, donum, ut ego, inventum Deorum.' See Löffler, *Magazin für Prediger.* vol. vii. part i. p. 26. De Wette *Religion und Theol.* (2d ed. Berlin, 1821.) pp. 72. 93. 232. and Wegscheider, § 11, 12.

‡ *Nulla alia ratio et via eas (the positive doctrines) examinandi*

the wheat in Scripture from the chaff, that is to say, to separate those parts of Holy Writ which recom-

datur, quam ut illarum placita cum iis quæ via naturali rectæ rationis de Deo ejusque voluntate ipsi innotuerint, diligenter componat, et ad hanc normam sine omni superstitione examinet. Wegscheid. § 11. p. 38. § 19. and note, p. 66. and following. See Döderlein Diss. de usu et abusu rationis hum. in rebus Divinis. Halle 1759. Wegscheider acts on this principle, throughout his works. Thus, for example, when speaking of the future state, he says, that Christ speaks of it in two ways, (1) that the soul, immediately after death, will pass to another life; and (2) that there will be a resurrection of the body; and that it cannot be denied, that this last doctrine is to be found in Scripture, (p. 560.) Then he proceeds as usual to decide on the truth of these notions, according to the principles of reason, (p. 571.), accepts the first and *rejects the last*. In the same way, writers of his class examine every doctrine above reason—and every miracle. In § 199. Wegscheider tells us, that the notion to be found in Scripture, of the Messiah's coming to judge the world, *must be false*; nay, that it opposes some of Christ's own declarations, which he quotes. It will be curious to mention these as a specimen of the vague and inapplicable passages, which these writers perpetually use to oppose the plainest and most positive declarations of Scripture. The first is John iii. 18. 'He that believeth not, is condemned already.' The second, Luke xvi. 22. where Lazarus is said on his death to have been carried into Abraham's bosom; and the third, John xviii. 36. where Christ says, that his kingdom is not of this world. From these passages, strange to say, Wegscheider concludes, that there can be no future judgment before Christ's throne; when St. Paul says, *disertis verbi*, (Romans xiv. 10.) 'We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.' Had the orthodox party used the parable of Lazarus

mended themselves to reason from all the mysteries and miracles which surpassed it.

It will be necessary to dwell at some length on the manner in which this examination * was conducted, for it will afford a complete insight into the views and proceedings of the Rationalists, and will sufficiently explain how they arrived at conclusions so remote from the truth. This examination, it must be remembered, was not confined to any one point ;

to prove any doctrine, they would have been overwhelmed with declamation against the absurdity of citing a parable so full of Jewish mythi, in proof of any point of doctrine.

* It will be asked if the consistent believer can object to this examination of Holy Writ, or can hope for its reception while he refuses the application of any reasonable test to it. Assuredly not! On the contrary, the believer challenges investigation to every part of the system, its history, its evidences, its doctrines—but then, he cannot be deemed unreasonable in requiring that at least it should not be treated worse than other writings, that such an examination should be fair, that there should not be a previous hypothesis which will influence it, that men should enquire what the writers did say, and not previously lay down what they *ought* to say, not establish partial criteria for judging what they have said, and most of all not assume what is in fact at the bottom of the dispute, and fix the limits of the credibility of Scripture by the comprehensibility of its assertions to human reason. I maintain that the Rationalizing divines have done this—that they chose to lay down a system which they think reasonable, which they think ought to be the Christian system, and that they resolved to make it so at any expence of Scripture.

it did not relate to the evidences only, or to the doctrines, but to every part and portion of the system ; and it professed to wield all the weapons requisite for such a warfare. Reason, history, and interpretation were alike to contribute their aid to this investigation. I have already stated, in the Introduction to this work, how far reason is able and authorized to go in inquiring into the pretensions of any plan of revelation offered to man. The Rationalists, on the contrary, maintained that the reason was justified in laying down what a revelation ought to contain. Then came the question whether a particular revelation actually tallied or could be made to tally with the prescribed standard. As it was inconvenient for many and obvious reasons to reject Christianity wholly, and as it could be of no matter by what name a religion was called or what were its pretensions, if the poison of positive doctrines, the sting of dogmas beyond reason was extracted, the Rationalists set to work to bring down Christianity to the required standard, by what they were pleased to call Historical Interpretation. I now proceed to give some account of it.

That a real and sound interpreter of God's word must add to a critical acquaintance and complete familiarity with its language, the widest historical knowledge, the knowledge of the opinions, pursuits,

and customs of the Jewish, and indeed of the Greek and Roman nations ; that in examining the words and phrases of Scripture, the peculiar opinions and habits of thought existing at the time of the writer, and likely to influence his style, must be investigated, is most true ; but this is not the peculiar merit of the Rationalists—this is the old and sound grammatical interpretation which was used by critics, far, very far, superior to any one of them, and long before the existence of their school, and which will be used by future critics when that school, its follies and its mischief, have passed away and are forgotten. This was not what the Rationalists meant by historical interpretation ; what they did mean will be better understood by a description than a definition. In interpreting the New Testament then, the *first* business of an Historical Interpreter is not to examine the words, but to investigate the disposition and character of the writer, his knowledge of religion, and the opinions of his contemporaries on that subject. From these, and *not* from the words, they seek the sense of Christ's and his followers' discourses ; and they examine the words by these previous notions, and *not by grammatical methods* *.

* The remarks of Ernesti (Inst. Interp. N. T. I. 1. § 18. and 21.) on this point are truly valuable. 'Omnino lubrica,' says he, 'et fallacissima est ratio, sensum verborum e rebus colligendi, cum res potius e verbis eorumque sensu, legitima ratione inda-

The notions held by the Jews in our Lord's time are, they contend, the points first to be studied by an interpreter. They seek thence to explain the history, the dogmatical part of the New Testament, nay, those very discourses of Christ, in which he delivers points of faith and morals; and thus enquire not what the Founder of our religion and his disciples really thought or said, in each passage, and in each sentence, regularly explained on acknowledged rules of interpretation, but what they might have said, and ought to have said, according to the opinions of the times, and their own knowledge of religion; not what Christ really meant in such or such a discourse, but how the Jews ought to have understood it; not what the apostles wrote, but whether what they wrote is true; that is, not whether it seemed true to them, but whether it is true, according to right reason; not what they actually taught, but what

gato, cognosci debeant.' And again, 'Qui sensus igitur clare per grammaticas leges tribuendus est verbis, non debet rejici propter rationes a rebus ductas.' Against whomsoever these observations were first directed, they are peculiarly applicable to the party who profess most falsely to follow Ernesti. They do not, indeed, make the Scripture of none effect, by mystical or allegorical interpretations; but their system is equally destructive. I recommend the Preface of the *Meletemata Sacra* of Dr. Tittman of Dresden (not the author of the *Pragmatische Geschichte*) to whom, as the reader will observe, I am indebted for some very valuable observations.

they must have taught from the limits of their own minds, and from the state of men and things in their days; and lastly, what they would have taught in other times, and to other men. This is the Rationalists' style of interpreting Scripture; a style which no commentator on even a profane writer would ever dream of adopting. He would never maintain that a Greek or Roman philosopher could not hold, and could not inculcate any opinions but those of his age and country; he would never pass from interpreting his author, to judging him; he would never, because he disliked a notion, or deemed it false, assert that it could not exist in the words of his author; nor would he assert that another did exist there, because, in his opinion, a writer under similar circumstances would have maintained it. This, I say, would not have been done by the commentator on a profane author, though this, and far more than this, has been done by this class of the German commentators on the sacred writers. I must add, that notwithstanding all that has been said of their learning, their exegesis, as any exegesis built on such views is and must be, is most contemptible, and most absurd. We have heard a great deal from the disciples of this school of the absurdities of the ancient interpreters; and it is doubtless true that under the influence of an honest belief, that all Scripture comes from God, these ancient

Interpreters arrived at the conclusion that the sacred text exists in all its first integrity, even in the minutest point, and that they consequently sought to reconcile apparent inconsistencies by doing unjustifiable violence to the senses of words. But, be it remembered, this licence was very rare, and it related to trifles. Was this the case with the Rationalists. No! assuredly not. In the face of common sense, in the face of what the pure infidel or the atheist, unless he had renounced all pretence to the use of his intellects, would have been ready to allow, viz. that the sacred writers *meant* to state that miracles were worked, whether such statement be true or not, the Rationalists maintained that the writers did not *mean* any such thing; that in the passages where the besotted intellect of orthodoxy seemed to read of the blind receiving sight, or the dead being raised, their clearer penetration discovered that nothing was intended but the relation of such every day facts as present themselves to our own eyes. These averments they proceeded to make good by their exegesis; and never hesitated to make words in a difficult passage mean exactly the contrary to what they ever meant elsewhere, to defy every law of construction, and laugh at all the niceties of grammar. They endeavoured to varnish their sophisms and blunders by a variety of quotations culled from their extensive reading; instances which, when examined, proved

either the folly or the dishonesty of those who produced them *.

No language can describe the disgust with which page after page of the commentaries on Scripture, by this party, is turned over, and page after page supplies fresh instances of the defiance of every law of thought, of sense, of language and of truth. I would refer to any of these commentators, to Hezel for example, or Augusti, or Eckermann, or as an

* Let us hear Fritzsche (on Matt. xiv. 33.) on this matter. He, it will be observed, quietly gets rid of the *force* of miracles by supposing them the errors and follies of an ignorant age. But he is far too sound a critic to deny or attempt to explain away his author's meaning. 'Frustra sunt, qui miraculorum impatientes ejusmodi loca eo fine in omnes partes explicando versant, ut emergat denique res, quæ ipsis fieri potuisse videatur. Quæ ratio omni est destituta fundamento. Nam quod miracula unquam edita esse negant, inde nihil lucrantur, quo causam suam confirmant. Haberent, quo niterentur, si aut neminem unquam miracula patrari credidisse, aut sacros certe scriptores abominatos portenta probari posset, quorum neutrum potest. Illinc vero fieri non poterat quin ab ea disciplina profecti quum grammaticas linguæ leges, quod pudere eos oporteat, violarent, tum suas quasdam narrationes componerent, non Evangelistarum explanarent, ut h. l. fecisse vidimus Paulum, contra quem non est, quod fusius disputem. Nam credo præclarum virum jamdudum suam de locis, quibus traduntur miracula, retractasse sententiam, ut eam bonorum interpretum consensus jam pridem repudiavit.'

extreme instance to those of Paulus *, a professor of theology, and in them I would desire no selection of

* I think that *much* cannot be required on this head ; and selection is not needed, for the same disgusting matter offers itself at every page. A single specimen of the method of treating the miracles of the Old Testament will suffice, and I shall go no farther in the first place than to Rosenmüller's note on Numbers xvi. 33. (P. II. p. 247. 2d ed. 1798.) He is treating of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Michaelis, he tells us, thinks that an earthquake took place, which Moses as a messenger from God could foresee. But others (Rosenmüller omits their names, and they are not worth enquiring for) think that Moses had taken care privily to undermine the whole of the ground on which the tents of the sinners were, and that thus there was no wonder either that they fell in or that he should know they would. But, says Rosenmüller, with great calmness, these writers did not consider how such a thing could be done privately in the midst of so many men, and in the course of a single day. Being discontented then with this wise explanation, he gives at some length Eichhorn's. Eichhorn thinks that the three offenders were burned alive with their property *by order of Moses*, and if we will interpret verses 31 and 32 according to the style of speaking and thinking among the ancients, he does not see that they contradict his theory.—Jacob's struggle with an angel is thus explained by one of the now (pretended) orthodox, but really rationalist party, Dinter. His brother died ; he dreamt soon after that a man with a peep-show showed him all sorts of pictures and at length showed him his dead brother. The vision said, ' To show you that I am really your brother, I will print a blue mark on your finger.' Dinter waked and found, not a blue mark, but a pain which lasted some days. ' Could not something similar,' he asks, ' have happened in Jacob's case ? Even the

any especial absurdity, but I would venture to say that the explanation of the first miracle which shall

less lively Occidentalists sometimes relates as real what only happened in his mind. Why should we be surprised at a similar occurrence in the warmer fancy of the Eastern man? Dinter, *Anweisung*, Part II. p. 159. (The reader will find some account of Dinter, and his extraordinary influence at present, below.) —Paulus* (*Kommentar* II. p. 658.) gives a dissertation on the miracle of the tribute-money and the fish. 'What sort of a miracle is it,' says Paulus, 'which is commonly found here? I will not say a miracle of about 16 or 20 groschen (2s. 6d.), for the greatness of the value does not make the greatness of the miracle. But it may be observed (I.) That as, first, Jesus received in general support from many persons, (Judas kept the stock, John xii. 6.) in the same way as the Rabbis frequently lived from such donations; as, secondly, so many pious women provided for the wants of Jesus; as, finally, the claim did not occur at any remote place, but at Capernaum, where Christ had friends, a miracle for about a dollar would certainly have been superfluous. But (II.) it would not only have been superfluous and paltry,—it would have taught this principle, that Peter, even when he could have remedied his necessities easily in other ways, might and ought to reckon on a miraculous interference of the Deity, a notion which would entirely contradict the

* There is an excellent remark on Paulus's method of explaining the miracles into natural phenomena in the Introduction to the Translation of Schleiermacher's work on St. Luke, p. cxlviii. 'Though there may be some seemingly well attested instances of psychological phenomenon, like those imagined by Paulus, yet they are at all events extremely rare and extraordinary; and, therefore, to suppose a recurrence of such phenomena within a short period so frequent as is necessary for the author's purpose, is in fact to suppose a temporary change in the course of nature, or at least does not bring the narrative within the sphere of ordinary history.'

occur will present an example of improbable reasoning, and false and misapplied philology, such as no

fundamental principle of Jesus or the interference of the Deity. Matt. iv. 7. If then we cannot think of a miracle here without ascribing a very improper maxim to Jesus, the bare philological possibility of so translating the words as to bring in a miracle, cannot be deemed sufficient authority for the reception of a sense, through which the reproach of a maxim, theologically and morally improper, and reprobated by himself in other places, must fall on the character of Jesus. Much more must not such a translation be allowed, when it is not to be considered as the only possible one. We should never accept a miraculous sense, if it is only the *possible*, not the *necessary* one. A miraculous explanation of an effect (I will say its explanation in any other than a natural way) always presupposes a proof that an explanation, not miraculous, is entirely impossible.' There is a great deal more of this, after which Paulus considers the narration, and shows that there is nothing of a miraculous appearance in it; for that if there had, 'the fiery Peter would not have been cold-blooded at such a miracle,' but would have expressed himself as in Luke v. 8.; that in the whole aim and tone of the narration there is no appearance of any wondering; that Christ only meant to give a moral lesson, viz. that we are not, if we can avoid it by trifling sacrifices, to give offence to our brethren; that he probably reasoned thus with Peter; 'Though there is no real occasion for us to pay the tribute, yet as we may be reckoned as enemies of the temple, and not attended to when we wish to teach what is good, why should not you who are a fisherman,' (a remark which might very properly be made at a place where Peter had been engaged in a fishery for two years) 'and can easily do it, go and get enough to pay the demand? Go then to the sea, cast your hook, and take up—*πρῶτον ἰχθύν*, the first and

church, no nation, no age can furnish, except the philosophical school of divinity erected in the Pro-

best fish. Peter was not to stay longer at his work this time than to gain the required money; *πρῶτος* often refers not to number but to time, (as in various passages alleged, *Æsch. Soc. III. 7. Odys. IV. 434.*) and *ἰχθύν* may *undoubtedly* be taken as a collective. Peter must either have caught so many fish, as would be reckoned worth a stater at Capernaum, (so near to a sea rich in fish) or one so large and fine as would have been valued at that sum! As it was uncertain whether one or more would be necessary, the expression is indefinite, *τὸν ἀναβάντα πρῶτον ἰχθύν*, but it would not be ambiguous to Peter, as the necessity and the event would give it a fixed meaning.—*Ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα.* This opening of the mouth might have different objects, which must be fixed by the context. If the fisherman opens the mouth of a fish caught with a hook, he does it first to release him from the hook, for if he hangs long, he is less saleable. He soon decays. The circumstantiality in the account is *picturesque*. “Take the hook out of his mouth!!”—*Ἐυρήσεις. εὐρίσκειν* is used in Greek in a more extended sense than the German *finden*, (as in *Xen. Œc. XX. 26.* where it is “to get by selling.” *Theoph. Char. XV. 1.*) When such a word is used of saleable articles, like fish, and in a connection which requires the getting a piece of money, it is clear that getting by *sale* and not by finding is referred to.’ I have not patience to transcribe any more of this, nor the defence of this interpretation against objections. And this from a Professor of Theology! this from a work of which Künöl says in his Preface, ‘multorum doctissimorum hominum puncta tulit!’ and which he perpetually quotes and refers to! a work which is offered for sale with the highest recommendations of some English Journals—the Critical Review pronouncing it to be ‘the most important, comprehensively learned, and *critically discriminating* of all Paulus’s works;

testant church of Germany in the eighteenth century. The student should remember, that there is and the Classical Journal assuring us that it is 'a work of the first order!'

Again in the same volume, p. 300, and following, we have an explanation of one of the miracles of the loaves and fishes, and we are told that there were always large caravans travelling near the time of the feasts, that they always carried plenty of meat and drink on beasts and in baskets, and that it is not according to Eastern hospitality (this is *historical* interpretation) to see your friends near you when you are eating without asking them to join you; that all which Jesus meant by saying they were without food, was that they had not had a *regular* meal, and that therefore he collected them, arranged them in parties, and set those who had food, the example of giving to those who had not any, by doing so himself with the small portion which he had. As long as eating was going on, Christ made the twelve go about with their baskets and give what they had to all who wished for it. The baskets were not entirely emptied, nor was any one left hungry, for if they had, they would have applied to the stock of the Apostles. Jesus, pleased to have done so much with so little, desired them to collect what there was in the different baskets into one*.

The passage (Matt. xiv. 23—36.) in which Jesus is said to have walked on the sea, is decided to be a mere philologic miracle, founded on a mistranslation of ἐπι. And it is asked for what reasonable end could Jesus walk himself on the sea, or enable Peter to do so? But Paulus explains the matter. The fact is, he says, that when Christ saw that the wind was contrary, he did not wish to sustain the inconvenience of such a voyage, but

* This is also Ammon's interpretation. See his Proleg. to Ernesti's Instit. p. 16.

something of this spirit even in Schleusner, a larger portion in Rosenmüller, and that Künöl at least per-

walked along the shore, and resolved to pass the disciples as the wind was against them. They coasted the shore from the state of the weather, and when they saw him walking on the land they were frightened, and on their calling out, Christ desired Peter, who as a fisherman was a good swimmer, to swim to shore and ascertain that it was he; Peter ran round to the proper side of the ship, and jumped into the sea. When he was frightened by the violence of the waves, Christ, who was standing on the shore, put out his hand and caught him. The boat put to land, and they both got in, &c. &c. There are eighteen pages of this and similar trash, and I see that Künöl devotes three or four to a detail of it, though I ought to observe that even he is against Paulus. But how perpetually are these writers, who wish to make every thing easy and natural, compelled to resort to the most unnatural and forced explanations, and the most improbable conjectures! * Why the Apostles should have been frightened at seeing a man walking along the shore, why he should have run round to a different part of the ship, how it is shown that the boat put to shore to take them in, these are all things passed by without notice. Besides this, the words *περιπατεῖν ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα* in Peter's case are translated 'to swim' without the slightest authority; the passage before that is thus pointed, *ιδόντες αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν, περιπατοῦντα, ἐταράχθησαν*, and is translated 'they looked towards him across the sea, going along the sea shore,' (*sahen ihn über das see hin, herumgehend am see*) though, as Künöl observes,

* For instance, in Matt. viii. 30. Some of them tell us, that the wind blew so loudly, that the apostles could not hear what Jesus said; but as the storm went down, they concluded he had ordered a calm. In Matt. viii. 28. some say that the swineherds had come to warn Jesus against the dæmoniac, that in their absence, the swine drove each other into the sea, and that Jesus then persuaded the dæmoniac that the devils had gone into them.

petually details the wildest dreams of some of the wildest of this school.

no Greek could possibly use *ἰδεῖν τινα ἐπὶ τι* in such a sense ; and the words *ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης*, are translated ' along, near,' I will not say against *all* authority, but in opposition to very far the greatest number of passages. This is enough of Paulus. I see by his note, that a person named Bolte, in his translation of St. Matthew, settles that Jesus swam as well as Peter ; and I learn from Künöl that in Henke's Neues Mag. VI. Part I. p. 310, it is decided that he forded the shallows. Ammon in his Preface to Ernesti's Institutio, has given a dissertation on miracles in general, and wipes them away by wholesale. In Matt. iii. 17. it was thunder. In Acts ix. 4. St. Paul was in a transport. In Matt. viii. 3. *καθαρίσαι* is to *declare* one pure. In xiv. 23. he explains the passage first ' to walk on the shallows' and then ' to swim.' In John xix. 34. *ρύσσω* is to strike. In Luke xxiv. 40. it is quite clear that the nails were *not* driven through the hands or feet. Some miracles arose from the fancy of the sick, as Luke viii. 40. Act. v. 18. xiii. 12. xvi. 8. xix. 12. Some arise from mistaken opinions or *embellishment on the part of the Apostles*. The temptation of Christ is only an exaggerated account of various conflicts of opinions from which he suffered ; there were no hot pools of Bethesda in the old Jerusalem ; the history of the adulteress as it is in St. John, is contrary to the custom of the Jews ; both these must therefore have been dressed up (though the last is certainly genuine) by the composer of this gospel. The story of Ananias and Sapphira was merely an ornamented account of the fact that Ananias died of fear in a meeting of the Apostles, and his wife followed soon after.—On Ammon's change of opinions, see the article from the Archives du Christianisme in the Supplement, and my Reply to Ammon in the Appendix.

Having thus shown what were the opinions of the Rationalists as to a revelation, and as to the inspiration, credibility and value of Scripture, and having noticed their style of examining its contents and of explaining its language, it remains only that I point out what were the results * of their opinions and

* Some of the especial results of the system of Historical Interpretation are pointed out by Wegscheider, § 25. After mentioning it as the only true method of interpretation, he adds, 'If in pursuing it, we are unable to recognize an entire and absolute agreement among all the declarations of Scripture; nay, if we rather find different methods of teaching (*τρόπους παιδείας*) on certain dogmas, which the writers, not entirely consistent with themselves, proposed, with the permission of God, in order to exercise the minds of their readers; (some of them exhibiting notions and opinions, common to the age when Christianity was introduced *, and well adapted to it; others, a purer system of religion, fit for all men and all times;) if we find besides, much which is difficult, and some things which Origen himself did not venture to call *untrue, absurd, and impossible*, we ought rather to seek and make use of the analogy and consent of those parts which, being perspicuous of themselves, are really of divine argument, i. e. as far as they agree with the true idea of the Deity, and of virtue, planted in our minds by God, and confirmed by Christ and his apostles, and with the genius and disposition of an universal religion, or which being in some historical and symbolical manner adapted to the capacity of uncultivated minds, shadow out the ideas of true religion. He goes on to say, that as the different sentiments in the Scripture have never been reconciled, we need not hesitate to separate them, and choose only

* Wegscheider's phrase is *ævo Christiano*.

prejudices, and what was the view of the Christian Revelation at which they finally arrived. It is hopeless amidst the chaos of writers, and chaos of contradictory theories, opinions and fancies, which they proposed to the entire confusion of thought and reason, to do more than mark the *general* tendency

the purer ones, and thus to form a system, which may be called *positive*, with as much justice as the old one, as far, that is to say, as its argument approved by its internal divine authority, (namely, by the assent of sound reason, illustrated by the light of divine truth) is confirmed also by the undoubted decrees of Scripture, as if by an external divine authority. "Thus we consult both the educated class who accept truth for its own sake, and the uneducated who are affected only by it, when recommended by some external authority. It is to be regretted, that it cannot be settled whether every thing attributed in the Gospels to Christ, is rightly referred to him; for some things, which *openly contradict one another*, easily excite a suspicion that they do not proceed from the same author*." The principal books on the historical method of interpretation, are Bretschneider's *Historisch-dogmatische Auslegung des N. T.* Leips. 1806., Keil's *Lehrbuch der Hermeneutik des N. T.* Leips. 1811., and the same writers *Vertheidigung d. Grammat. Interp. d. Bücher d. N. T.* I need hardly say, that it is the abuse of this method to which I object, and to which I attribute the evils in the interpretations of the Rationalizing party.

* These opinions were very common. In Augusti's *Theol. Zeit.* No. ix. p. 196, 207, for 1801, it is asked whether it would not be better if we had no written documents about Christ; the writer says that it is probable that the pure doctrine is certainly not to be found in the New Testament, or that at least several mistakes have been intermixed—that the apostles often misunderstood Christ's meaning—that the documents of the New Testament contain many contradictions, &c. &c.

of their sentiments. I ought here distinctly to say, that the full extent* of many of the opinions I have

* I earnestly hope, that I have not misrepresented the opinions of the party—but where men engage in so wide a subject as theology, and are bound by no common laws of thought, it would of course be vain to attempt giving more than a sketch of their tendencies. This remark is the more called for, because so many of them have themselves varied in, and even entirely renounced their former opinions. Thus, for example, I find from an article in the *Archives du Christianisme** (vol. vii. No. 9, 10, 11, and 12.) that Kaiser has in the preface (p. 3, 4.) to his *Biblische Moral* (1821) announced the entire change of his opinion on these subjects, and declared, that the word of God revealed in the Bible, is now his one and all (*eins und alles*). Ammon again has decidedly changed, as appears from several of his later works, and the author of this article says, that several of the Rationalists have done the same in their Lectures. Among these he names De Wette, once Professor at Berlin, and now at Bâle. ‘One

* I believe that a German divine, named Stapfer, (resident at Paris), is the author of this very able and excellent article. The author takes almost entirely the same view which I have done of the Rationalizing school, and complains with great justice, that the old errors which they have revived, should be presented as really modern discoveries, the result of a deeper study of antiquity, of the progress of historical knowledge, aided by a sound psychology, and by a comparison of the different wants of man, at different epochs of his history. With equal justice, he represents the danger of all this to a student, who can hardly believe, that learned professors would venture to bring forward as the clear result of long discussion, mere conjectures more or less ingenious, fantastic combinations, and suppositions as fanciful as they are rash, or that *they would confidently quote works, which entirely overthrow all these theories by anticipation*. Unsuspicious of professorial quackery, the young divine will never dream of the ability or weight of the adversaries whom these writers pass over in silence, or treat with contempt; and will not imagine that a theory, which he is led to suppose all candid writers adopt, is, if not already abandoned by all, at least rejected by a great number of theologians of the first merit.—The reader will find the principal part of this article in the Supplement.

to mention, is not held by all the divines of whom I speak. They are bound by no law but their own

may, it is believed,' says Mr. Pusey (p. 177 note), 'safely instance De Wette as one whose really Christian faith is only obscured by his adherence to the Friesian philosophy.' The writer in the Archives De Wette's refers to Christliche Sittenlehre, (Berlin, 1812.) i. p. 148—201. ii. p. 107. his Theodor, (Berl. 1822.) which is the history of a sceptic restored to the belief (according to this writer, that of Mr. De Wette himself) and his 'Vorlesungen über die Sittenlehre,' (Berlin, 1823.) i. 18. 183. 260. 340. 355. 391, 392. ii. 184. 251. 257. 267. 269. 272. 283. 310. 336—339 The writer in the Arch. du Christianisme speaks in very strong terms of the revulsion just experienced in Germany, and the discredit into which the Rationalists are beginning to fall; and he gives some very sensible cautions to those who oppose them. But again, there is another source of difficulty touched on in the same paper (433). The writers on the same side of the question took different views of it. 'Some,' says the author, 'who defended the supernatural origin of Christianity, thought they did good to their cause by reducing Revelation to the simple authentic promulgation of truths accessible to human faculties, while others, who rejected all belief in an immediate intervention of the Deity in human affairs, deduced from their rational systems, or violently incorporated in them, under different forms, those very mysterious doctrines, which the others sought to get rid of, as incompatible with sound reason, and as injurious to the credit of the Gospel. Frequently again, the exposition of dogmas placed out of the sphere of human intelligence, conducted the learned interpreters, who recognized the clear and incontestible declaration of them in Scripture, to entirely opposite conclusions. While some thought, that they perceived there the trace of the alterations introduced into pri-

fancies ; some believe a little more, some a little less ; some are more, some are less extravagant ; but, after this declaration, I do the Rationalists no injustice in saying, that the general inclination and tendency of their opinions is this, that in the New Testament we shall find only the *opinions* of Christ and the apostles, *adapted to the age in which they lived*, and not eternal * truths ; that Christ himself

mitive truth, by the first propagators of Christianity, through the introduction of their national prejudices and individual ideas into the pure and sublime religion of Jesus ; others, regarding these mysteries as a necessary supplement to the light of reason abandoned to its own resources, saw in them the strongest proofs of the supernatural origin of the Gospel. Thus, there was the singular spectacle of persons using the same arguments to arrive at conclusions diametrically opposite ; a spectacle well adapted to inspire a salutary distrust of reason, and a singular deference for doctrines, submitted perpetually to fresh verifications, to the constant examination of men of the most different moral and intellectual culture, and to the trial of every degree of intelligence, doubt, strength, and weakness, which falls to the lot of humanity.'

* This is the very sum and substance of all the statements of the Rationalists. See Tittman's *Pragm. Geschicht.* p. 208. Behn über die Lehrart Jesu und Seiner Apost. Leips. 1791. Stäudlin, *Dogmat. und Dogmengesch.* p. 146. Henke *Magaz.* V. 539. N. *Magaz.* II. 249. Bretschneider *Versuch einer Systemat. Entwicklung aller in der dogmat. vorkommenden Begriffes.* (2d ed.) p. 135. Some maintain that the doctrines of the New Testament were not only temporary, but local. See Wegscheider, p. 54. note 1. and Häfeli's *Nachgel. Schriften*, edited by Stolz. vol. ii. p. 73.

had neither the design nor power of teaching any system which was to endure ; that when he taught any enduring truth, as he occasionally did, it was without being aware of its nature ; that the apostles understood still less of real religion ; that the whole doctrine, both of Christ and his apostles, as it is directed to the Jews alone, so it was gathered, in fact, from no other source than the Jewish philosophy * ; that Christ himself erred, and his apostles spread his errors, and that consequently no one of their doctrines is to be received on their authority ; but that without any regard to the authority of the books of Scripture, and their asserted divine origin, each doctrine is to be examined according to the principles of right reason before it is allowed to be divine. This last was the point in which, from various indications in their writings, the innovators appear to me to have found most difficulty to satisfy themselves and answer their opponents. They allowed, it may be observed, that there were certain enduring truths in Christianity ; but the difficulty was to settle the exact limits of the theory of accommodation ; and to distinguish clearly between the temporary and the substantial. This difficulty was increased, because all of them had not entirely the same views as to the origin of Christianity, and the intentions of its

* See Wegscheider, § 20, 21. Bertholdt's *Christologia Judæorum*, Præf. p. 15. Ammon. *Opusc.* p. 54. Bahrdt. p. 47. note [F].

Founder. They who held the extreme of the opinions I have just been stating, of course considered that the only substantial parts of Christianity were the truths of natural religion *; and every thing be-

* See the whole of Tittman's 18th section. Bahrdt. p. 31. note [G] says of the modern Theologians, 'Sunt qui omnes sectas pariter habeant, Christique doctrinam solas rationis veritates complecti statuant.' Henke, in his 'Lineamenta Inst. fid. Christ.' before quoted, maintains, that all revealed religion will by degrees pass over into natural religion *. In an essay by J. C. G. Ackermann (Erlangen 1826,) called 'Libertatis Evangelicæ Vindicæ atque Fines,' it is stated (p. 23.) that the only ground on which the Rationalists thought any respect due to Christianity was, that it was a good exposition of the truths of natural religion ;

* There are some very curious observations on the subject in Göthe's Memoirs, I. p. 205, and following. He says that amidst the numberless philosophical researches, a little before his day, or while he was young, theologians could not long avoid meeting with a religion called natural—that they decided that the light of nature might lead us to the knowledge of a God and to moral improvement—that they said all positive religions were entitled equally to respect, *i. e.* that all were equally good—but that no one was more certain than any other. They permitted the edifice of Religion to remain, and confessed the importance and merit of the Bible—found valuable reflections, observations and duties superior to those in any other book. Hence they allowed it to serve as the foundation of our belief in preference to any other. But in time it shared the fate in which the lapse of time involves every profane work. Its inspiration had long been maintained, while the obvious inequalities had been the subject of many controversies. Writers of different nations had attacked it, while the best thinkers in each defended it, but the unjust attacks on it had induced part of the faithful to accept cordially the notion that God had accommodated himself to the understanding and opinions of men—and that the Prophets, though inspired, had not changed their personal character, so that the language of Isaiah, the man of princely birth, was different from that of Amos, the driver of cattle. Hence the study of the localities, characteristics, &c. of the East.

At p. 247 Göthe says, (speaking of the time when he left Leipsic, 1768,) 'The Christian Religion was then fluctuating between its own constitution, founded on historical traditions, as well as on positive laws, and a pure Deism, the source of belief, and which was in turn destined to become its foundation.'

side, every peculiar and distinguishing doctrine of Christianity, every thing relating to the divinity and person of the Saviour, with all the consequences to be derived from those doctrines, nay, even the supposition * of a divine authority, in the proper sense

and that they contended it was necessary to clear it from all the absurd additions introduced by the superstition of the apostles, which were hardly fit for old women, and would be laughed at even by the people in these days. Unless this was done, and Christianity thus brought back to the simplicity of natural religion, it must sink to nothing. See also p. 43 of the same essay, where the writer states that, if it were proper, he could name men who were not ashamed to propose getting rid of every positive doctrine.

* See Tittman's *Prag. Gesch.* p. 216. and the two works to which he refers, viz. 'Versuch über den Ursprung der Erkenntniss der Wahrheit und der Wissenschaften. Berlin, 1787.' and 'Ausführung des plans und des zwecks Jesu.' vol. ii. p. 355. But there is another writer, who held this opinion even more strongly if possible. Schmid in a work called, 'Ueber den Geist der Sittenlehre Jesu und Seiner Apostel. (Jena, 1790.)' expressly says, that, the principles of the Kantian system of morals are the foundation of the moral teaching of Christ and his apostles, that the spirit of the morality of Christ is only the pure morality of reason; that its only ground is the principle of reason, and that Jesus had no other aim than to introduce a religion and morality of the heart and spirit, instead of the Jewish religion, and to erect a moral church; that every thing else which he taught was not real, but merely as an outward form and clothing, and a means for the first introduction of his doctrine. See Staüdlin's *Geschichte der Christl. Moral.* p. 789. Schröckh VIII. p. 121.

of the word, were mere accommodations to the prejudices and ignorance of the age. They were, however, still anxious, for obvious reasons, to talk of the divinity of Christianity, and to speak of it as a revelation, and they could do so in consonance with their opinions, because, as I have just said, they allowed that Christianity did contain some truths, and as all that is good and true comes from God *, might consider its truth and divinity as synonymous. It is this idle equivocation which enabled these writers to keep up appearances, and retain the terms and phrases used by Christian writers †, while in fact many of them laid aside all that is peculiar to Christianity, and considered it only as natural religion ; and as

‘ Eckermann, in his *Dogmatik*, maintained that the whole system of Jesus was only a popular direction to a right, moral, and reasonable worship of God, and that every thing else which is found in the N. T. and is reckoned as Christianity, is only accommodation, history, or recent addition. The clear doctrine of Jesus must be looked for in the Gospels ; in the Epistles are many additions and marks of misunderstanding and error, and even in our Gospels, the narrations of the real composers are mixed up with many foreign additions, and owe their present form to persons at the end of the first or second century.’ Stäudlin *Geschichte der Rat.*, &c. p. 301.

* See Eckermann’s *Theologische Beiträge*, vol. ii. p. 2. Tittman, p. 225.

† On the Rationalists’ dishonesty in this point, see my *Appendix*, pp. 34 and 95.

all that was left in it after their operations was still good and true, still held that it is so far divine. When it was urged on them, that, even if the Jews be said to have mistaken between natural and supernatural, Christ absolutely asserts the immediate divine origin of his doctrine, that the apostles positively distinguish between the truths of natural religion and revelation, and that the notion of an immediate agency is the very groundwork of the whole narrative of the origin and first history of Christianity and of its Founder, all this was answered by the never-failing hypothesis of accommodation *. When the prophecies † of the Old Testament were cited,

* There are some excellent remarks on this misceivous theory in Starck's *Philosophical Dialogues* (p. 113—116.), a work of which some account will be found below.

† Ammon. (*Summa. Theol.* §. 13.) says, that leaving to philosophers to decide, whether the gift of prophecy be possible or not, it is quite clear, that Christ himself directly renounces the power (*Matt.* xxiv. 36. *Acts* i. 7.) and that therefore there are no prophecies of his in the New Testament *, that prophecies are recorded in the Bible, as uttered by men of doubtful character †, as in *Numb.* xxii. 5, *1 Kings* xxii. 22., *2 Chron.* xviii. 13. that many are obscure, and never were fulfilled ‡, that others seem to

* He seems in the note to except *Matt.* xiii. 40. xvii. 22. xx. 19. *Luke* xiii. 30. But surely one is sufficient to overturn his argument.

† Wegscheider, (p. 178.) adds *Numb.* xxii. 5. *1 Sam.* xv. 32. *Jonah* i. 3. iv. 1. *John* xi. 51. The persons here mentioned, are reckoned unworthy of God's assistance, as if we were to judge what means God ought to pursue, or what agents it is proper for him to employ.

‡ Wegscheider refers to *Isai.* xxix. 34. *Isai.* lxi. 55. *Dan.* ii. 7. *Hos.* ix. 3.

appeal was made to the interpreters on the new

have been made after the event *, that all are reckoned obscure and imperfect, by the apostles themselves. As these accusations apply, he says, to almost all the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, it must be confessed, that the argument from prophecies needs whatever excuse it can find, both in the delirium of the prophets who were transported out of their senses (John xi. 31. 2 Pet. i. 21.), the double sense in which they are quoted in

xi. 5. Ezek. xl. and following. Luke i. 32, 33. Acts ii. 30. Matt. xxvi. 32. comp. Acts i. 4, and other places.

* Wegscheider repeats this charge very offensively, and cites Gen. xxv. 23. xxvii. 27. xxix. 39. xl. 49. Numb. xxiv. 17. Deut. xxxiii. He too (as indeed does also Ammon) says there are others altered from their real meaning, and explained differently, so as to apply to some event which took place, as Dan. ix. 34. Ps. xvi. comp. Acts ii. 29. Ps. xxii. 17. comp. John xix. 23. Isa. lii. Matt. xii. 40. Rosenmüller on Isaiah xxi. tells us that this *pretended* prophecy of the fall of Babylon contains such an exact account of the circumstances of the siege, that there is no doubt it was written by some one present at it. Again, in the preface to chap. xxiii. where there is a prophecy of the fall of Tyre, he says that the prophecy was uttered at the time; and that moreover there are certain words used which clearly fix this prophecy to be later than Isaiah. For the Nile is called *יְיִטְי* which only occurs in Jer. xi. 18. and 1 Chron. xiii. 5.; and the two methods of defining time in ver. 15, viz *by the years of a king* and *seventy years*, show a later age; for the first only occurs in Dan. viii. 21. (comp. vii. 4.) and the other is quite peculiar to Jeremiah. And, besides this, two words are written in a Chaldaic way in ver. 11. So also Eichhorn, *Einleit. in das alte Test.* part iii. p. 72-83. (3d edition.) How wild in such a language as Hebrew, and with such imperfect data for fixing the interval between Isaiah and the time when the Book of Chronicles was written, to determine a matter of such moment on circumstances, not strong if certain, and uncertain because of a nature where the difference might be wholly the work of a transcriber! But one of Rosenmüller's most positive declarations is that on Numbers xxiv. 19. He settles that the star and sceptre refer not to the Messiah, but to David, and then adds, 'Who can believe that these things could be foretold by Balaam? Certainly, if such an oracle was found in the book of a Greek or Roman writer, no one would doubt that it *was invented after the transactions which it foretells took place.*' What he may say on this point, in his new edition, I am not solicitous to enquire. I have already the strongest assurance from his method of discussing such questions, that his opinion on any subject must be of very trifling value.

plan, who asserted constantly that there were no

the New Testament, (Matt. ii. 23. Rom. x. 18.), and the remarkable variety of interpretation. Ammon and Wegscheider further say, that Jesus in Matt. xi. 11. Luke vii. 28. spoke in terms of contempt of the Hebrew prophets, which is quite untrue. Wegscheider adds, that prophecies would favour fatalism, take away human freedom, and are irreconcilable with the Divine perfections; that there are no prophecies properly so called, or sufficiently clear in either Testament; and that that of Christ as to the destruction of Jerusalem is not announced with sufficient clearness; that Jesus followed the style of interpretation found in the Talmudic and Rabbinical writing, and transferred to himself many things in the Old Testament, which really referred to future changes in the state of the Jews, as they seemed to apply, and he might thus use the Jewish ideas of a Messiah, to further his own notions of founding the Messiah's spiritual kingdom. Eichhorn in his book, called *Die Hebräischen Propheten* (in 3 vols. 8vo. Göttingen, 1816—1819.) has attempted to show, that the prophecies in the books of the Old Testament, generally merely give a poetical dress to affairs carried on in the prophet or the poet's life-time. In his introduction to the Old Testament (Part iii. pp. 1 and 31.) it will be found that he says that there are very few pretences to prophecy in the Prophets—that they were sharp clever men who saw farther into futurity than their contemporaries. But the feeling in this school is very distinctly shown by the following contemptuous note of the younger Rosenmüller on Isa. vii. 17. '*Quum Vitringæ, ut ceteris omnibus suæ ætatis interpretibus, hæc alte infixæ esset persuasio, singulis Hebræorum effatis certos respondere eventus,*' &c. They who are curious to see more on this subject, may refer to Eckermann's *Theol. Beiträge*, vol. I. and II., and to a paper by Ziegler in *Henke's Mag.* I. 1. and also to the same work, I. p. 561, to Gesenius *Commen-*

prophecies to be found, or (what perhaps was stranger still,) that there was nothing in the Old Testament clear enough to argue from without

tar über den Jesaia I. 828, to Ammon's Bibl. Theol. II. 1—240, to his Ausführl. Unterr. p. 140. and to Scherer's Ausf. Erklärung der Sämmtl. Weissag. der N. T. Leipsic, 1803. In speaking of Christ's prophecy of his own resurrection, Paulus devotes seven pages of his commentary to prove that Christ never meant any such prophecy (vol. II. p. 564—571.) His first proof is, that the apostles did not understand it so, as is clear from the women's seeking to embalm him, and from the apostles themselves not believing the story of his resurrection at first. Then he argues (from Matt. xxvi. 29. Mark xiv. 25. Luke xxii. 18.) that Christ had no notion of returning *shortly*—and that he would not have thought it necessary to cheer his disciples as he did before his death, if he could have prophesied that in three days he should join them again. All the promises of meeting again with the apostles, Paulus refers merely to meeting in a future life. Wegscheider adds, that Christ, though he reproaches his disciples with their want of faith, does not allude to any distrust of a prophecy of his; and that the phrase *three days* is often used of what will soon happen, as in Cic. Epist. ad Qu. frat. I. 4. See also Paulus Meletem. ad Hist. de Res. Mortuorum. Jena, 1796. Herder's Erlöser der Menschen (Riga, 1794.) p. 76. Eichhorn's Allgem. Biblioth. vol. VII. Part VI. (1797.) p. 1039. It is painful to find such passages as the following in the works of Schleiermacher, 'Es kann niemals befriedigend nachgewiesen werden, dass jene Propheten Christus, so wie er wirklich gewesen, und das Christenthum, so wie es sich wirklich entwickelt hat, vorhergesagt haben, und somit verschwindet in diesen hinsicht der bestimmte Unterschied zwischen Weissagung und unbestimmter Ahnung.' Bahrdt (*ubi supra*) tells us, that the prophets were good and wise

danger of arbitrary conclusions *, until the notion of an immediate agency was established on other grounds. They appear to me indeed to wish to imply with Hume, that no evidence could establish a prophecy. Some, however, adopted a different method, and went so far as to attack the whole body of the prophets as impostors in the most outrageous and revolting terms †. With respect to the mira-

men, who opposed the superstitious notions of the ages in which they lived, and defended the doctrine of nature, *afterwards renewed by Christ*, against superstition. Bauer (in his ed. of Glass. Phil. Sacr. vol. II. §. 2. Part I. §. 3. p. 259.) says, that all interpreters err by introducing Christian doctrines into the prophetic and poetical parts of the Old Testament, and afterwards (p. 401, sq. §. 95 and 96.) expressly states, that the prophets were inspired only according to the notion that all sudden movements of the mind come from God; and that the words attributed to Him, are only to be reckoned as the thoughts arising spontaneously in the prophet's mind.

* Tittman says (p. 228) Die exegeten schienen, wenn sie auch nicht interesse dabey hatten, in den Weissagungen des A. T. keine Weissagungen zu finden, doch so viel nur erinnern zu müssen, dass man nicht ohne gefahr willkürlicher Schlüsse aus jenen Weissagungen eine folge ziehen könne, welche nur dann nöthigend seyn würde, wenn man dabey eine unmittelbare göttliche einwirkung nothwendig annehmen müsste. So Bahrdt Syst. Theol. Luth. Orth. p. 145. note [O.] 'At omnem a Veteri Test. Christi et filii Dei mentionem alienam esse, ipsique per interpretationes arbitrarias modo illatam, esse, viri hodie doctissimi censent.'

† There is a book by Scherer, (a clergyman in Hesse Darm-

cles *, when they were urged as proofs of immediate

stadt) already quoted, called *Ausführliche Erklärungen der sämtliche Messianische Weissagungen*, published at Altenburgh and Erfurdt 1801, and Leipsic 1803. Scherer represents the prophets of the Old Testament as so many Indian jugglers, who made use of the pretended inspiration of Moses, and the revelations of the prophets, to deceive the people. He treats those who have still any regard for the prophecies of the New Testament as enthusiasts and simpletons, calls all the predictions respecting the person of the Messiah nonsense, accuses the prophets of being cunning deceivers, and says that the belief of those prophets brought and has preserved incredulity on earth. This precious work is praised by the *Allgem. Deutsche Bibliothek*. LXIX. p. 228 and 238, as a very commendable book, inasmuch as it contributes to dissipate the shades of ignorance, blindness, and folly. But there is a book called *Moses und Jesus*, by Buchholz, published at Berlin in 1803, in which Moses especially is abused, and accused first of deceit, and then of terrorism. Jänisch also (*Univers. überblick der Entwicklung der Measchengeschlechts*) makes the same charge, and says that the Levites were the satellites and executioners of Moses, whom he used for the purpose of establishing his power. This man was a preacher at Berlin. There is an Essay 'On the Priest-and-Prophet-Clubs of the Jews,' in Scherer's *Archiv zur Vervollk. des Bibelstudiums* (vol. i. part i.) in which the prophets are made out to be Demagogues and Radical Reformers.

* I adopt the 17th section of Ammon's *Summa Theol.* as the ground-work of what I have to say on this topic. 'There were afterwards theologians, who in opposition to this opinion, (that is, the importance of miracles as an argument) said, that God ruled the world, which he had made, by a true and very great miracle, with an unchangeable will, and that, therefore, on account of his

agency, by some they were said to be that mytho-

very great wisdom *the irrevocable laws of nature could not change.' Ammon here refers to his own *Theologische Abhandlungen*, Part ii. p. 157. Göttingen, 1799. *Aufhellungen neuerer Gottesgelehr.* I. p. 540. Eckermann's *Handbuch*, I. 439. I would add Döderlein (*Inst. Theol. Christ.*) § 9, 10. particularly p. 27. 'Then came the philosophers, who denied that a supernatural event could be known by any man, by experience, and plainly taught, that the eternal moral order of things could not be disturbed by such a notion, without superstition. Historical and critical writers, showed that there was not evidence for the greater part of miracles, and that facts contrary to nature were not mentioned in Scripture (Matt. xvi. 1.)' (Here he refers to his own *Theolog. Bibl.* II. p. 342. 2d ed.) 'Interpreters proved that faith was not nourished, but rather damped by miracles (Matt. xvi. 23. John vi. 2. 30. xi. 46.), for the truth of the doctrine is superior

* I must desire pardon if I translate inaccurately, but the fact is, that Ammon, Wegscheider, and some others of the same school, are so loose and careless in their Latin compositions, nay, frequently, so ungrammatical, that it is not always easy to do more than get at their general meaning. How ardently is it to be desired, that (while to the honour of Germany, classical literature is so much cultivated and so highly honoured,) the character of divine and philologer was not so often separated as it is, in that country, but that men would remember, that they who can best interpret other books, can best interpret Scripture also, that they would study Ernesti's works, and tread in his steps. I believe I am correct in saying, that, till a very recent period, Schleiermacher was almost the only divine in Germany, who was likewise a great scholar. Paulus and the rest of the Rationalist party are learned men, if learning consists in reading, and in the congestion of materials, but they are not scholars, not critics, not able to apply what they have collected, nor to choose what ought to be collected. It is a proud boast of the English church, that a very large portion of the great scholars of England, have been divines, and that most of her great divines have been great scholars too. To this circumstance must be imputed the *soundness* of interpretation, for which English divinity is honourably remarkable. Need I cite the names of Pearson, and Stillingfleet, and Bentley, and Lowth, and Toup, in past times, or observe, that except Porson, almost every scholar of recent times, was, or is, in holy orders?

logy * which must attend every religion to gain the

to the authority of the miracle, and that is to be shown by internal arguments, and proved, before we can safely judge of the miracle. We therefore think, that the Biblical doctrine, as to miracles, viz. that they were events to excite wonder, is the right one, and look on them, after Christ, (John xiv. 11.) not as primary arguments, but subsidiary means of knowing the truth. For experience shows, that the faith of novices is easily built upon the miracles of Scripture, which bespeak a particular providence.' That our Saviour attributed little to the evidence of miracles is *attempted* to be shown by Nitzsch in a thesis, called 'Quantum Christus tribuerit miraculis' (Wittenberg, 1726), by Eckerman Theol. Beitr. V. 2. and by Paulus in the N. Theol. Journal, IX. 342. Wegscheider tells us (with many others whom I have quoted on the words 'whether a revelation be possible') that we have no means for knowing what are real miracles—that all barbarous people fill their history with prodigies (see Anton Comparatio Librorum SS. Vet. Fœd. et Scrip. profan. Græc. Latinorumque eum in finem instituta, *ut similitudo quæ inter utrosque deprehenditur, clarius appareat*. Gori. 1816—21. Part iv. Kaiser Bibl. Theol. I. 189. Herder Christl. Schrift. II. 96. and especially Bauer's edition of Glass. Philol. Sacr. vol. ii. Part ii. p. 261.)—that in some cases the historians mix facts and reasonings (see Gurlitt Oratio de usu librorum SS. ad humanitatem, &c. excolendam. Hamb. 1803. Krummacher Ueber den Geist und die form der Evang. Geschichte. Leips. 1805. p. 81. Briefe über d. Rat. p. 338. 343. 355.)—that they follow traditions (as for instance, those of the creation, the nativity of Christ, and some circumstances of his death) and relate mythi—or again, relate events not at all contrary to the

* See page 156.

attention of the multitude; by some, the common

common course of nature (Exod. xv. 25. See Michaelis Orient. Bibl. vol. v. p. 61. Exod. xiii. 21. De Wette Kritik der Israel. Geschichte, I. 206. Exod. xvi. Judg. xv. 15. comp. Joseph. Ant. V. 10. Matt. ix. 18—26. Luke viii. 27—35. Mark viii. 22. John i. 50. ix. 6, 7. Briefe über den Rat^s. p. 215.) Again, says Wegscheider, the sacred writers confess, that the truth of the doctrine does not depend on the miracle (Deut. xvii. 11. Matt. xii. 27. Luke ix. 49. Gal. i. 8. et al.) but must be proved before we can judge of the miracle; and it is clear, that these wonders (as, for example, those of curing the sick) which even Jesus confesses could be worked by his countrymen (Luke xi. 19. John xiv. 12.) had no effect on the people, but rather increased their disbelief (Matt. xvi. 1. xxi. 23. et al.) from which even the apostles were not free (Lukexxiv. 21); and it cannot be thought they could produce any stronger effects in after ages, than on the spectators. Christ himself also entirely rejected all faith which depended on miracles (Matt. xii. 39. et al.); and such a belief is extremely unfavourable to virtue, and breaks the sanctity of the moral law (see Kant Religion innerhalb d. gränz. d. bl. Vernunft, p. 116.). Hence, like Ammon, Wegscheider adopts what he calls the Biblical notion, and considers miracles as striking events to catch attention, which, as we cannot now doubt, however a barbarous age might, proceed from the established order of things. Their practical use was for the novices and the ignorant, to induce them to learn the truth, and they were not intended as arguments. In a stronger sense they are not reconcilable with God's perfections and the direction of the human mind, which is necessarily bound to certain laws of experience, and cannot recognise any certain proofs of a supernatural operation. Indeed Schleiermacher himself (I. § 20. p. 116.) on this last point seems to agree with Wegscheider. 'Die wunder im engern sinne d. h.

and well-known arguments and ribaldry of the infi-

Erscheinungen im Gebiet der Natur, welche aber nicht auf natürliche Weise sollen bewirkt werden seyn, können an und für sich gar keinen beweis liefern.' So Bretschneider Handbuch der Dogmat. I. 187. See Herder Christl. Schrift. II. 259. Niemeyer Briefe an Christl. Religionslehrer, I. 208. Greiling Das Leben Jesu von Nazareth. p. 157. De miraculis Enchiridion a Philosopho Theologo exhibitum. Zwickau, 1805. Ammon. Nov. Opusc. p. 173.

To show that the miracles can be explained as mere natural events, there is a book by Eck, called Versuch die Wundergeschichten des N. T. natürlich zu erklären (Berlin, 1795.) See also another book with the title Erklärung der Sammtlichen Wundergeschichten des A. T. aus natürlichen Ursachen. 2 vols. 8vo. Berlin, 1800—4., Paulus's ivth vol. and Bretschneider's Syst. Entwicklung der Dogmat. begriff. p. 246. Bauer's Hebr. Mythologie des A. und N. Test. and Kaiser Bibl. Theol. I. 195.

I. G. Rosenmüller in his Beweis der Wahrheit der Christl. Religion, p. 35. says, that miracles have lost all their force as proofs : and Thies the translator of the New Testament tells us, that neither the conversion of St. Paul, nor the ascension of Christ, will now make converts, for as the sphere of nature enlarges, miracles vanish. On the conversion of St. Paul, see Bretschneider Handbuch der Dogmat. I. 191. Wegscheider (p. 175.) says, that the story is so told, that we can make nothing of it; and that we must remember, that St. Paul was much inclined to visions and extasies. As to the ascension of Christ, Wegscheider has written expressly to prove it a mythus, in the Allgem. Lit. Zeit. 1812. N. 53. See also Kaiser Bibl. Theol. I. p. 260. Wegscheider, (p. 365.) says, that *though Christ seemed to the standers-by to expire, yet, after a few hours, being given up to the sedulous care of his friends, he re-*

del were unsparingly used ; by one or more, high

turned to life on the third day. See De Wette Bibl. Dogmat. 258. One person called Brennecke, has written a book to show, that Christ lived twenty-seven years on earth after his ascension. This book, which went through two editions at Luneburg in 1819, is mentioned both by Hohenegger and Wegscheider ; but I have not seen it, and cannot imagine the line of argument pursued. Wegscheider says it is entirely exegetical but contemptible. A list of the writers against it is given in Bretschn. Handb. d. Dogmat. II. p. 212. and there is a treatise by Weber called, Gift und Gegengift (Hall. 1820.)—Schleiermacher, who does not indeed reject all miracles, but much that is beyond common experience, does so on the ground of want of evidence. He does not, in short, in some cases, believe the assertions of the writers, in others he resolves all into poetical colouring. Thus (p. 301, of his Critical Essay on St. Luke in the Translation,) he denies the assertion of the Evangelist that an angel appeared to Christ, simply because we have *only* Luke's testimony, and it is not clear how the information could have been gained. This is poor ground to take on such a question. So also (p. 305.) he speaks of the veil being rent, simply because, according to him, the priests would have concealed it if true, and neither Matthew nor Luke could have known it, or if they had, the other apostles would have often appealed to this strong fact, as if they appealed (in their writings) to half the miracles, or as if that affected the question ! Again, p. 25, we are told that chap. i. of St. Luke is a little poetical work ; and, p. 28, he doubts or denies many of the facts it contains. So subsequently he judges of chap. ii.

* A splendid specimen of what can be said on this point, may be found in a little book, called 'Vindiciæ Sac. N. T. Scripturarum, oppugnatarum ab iis, quibus Mythi et Prodigia of-

in station in the church, some artifice (probably

fensioni sunt,' published at Helmstadt in 1825, avowedly by a Lutheran; and from internal evidence, by a minister of that persuasion (p. 15). Its professed object is to vindicate Scripture from the suspicions of those who are offended at miracles; and the method pursued is the arguing, that every religion must have a mythology, and that the history of Christ and the miracles, are the mythology by which the salutary moral truths of Christianity are recommended to those who would not have received them without this dress. The author begins with the usual positions, that we must judge of ancient writers according to the spirit of their age, as they must lend themselves to the barbarous notions of the times in which they lived; that every religion must have attractions, and that the strange things we find in Scripture, are put in for that purpose; that although we had better leave things as they are for the vulgar, who must have something external to rely on, yet divines should examine and find out the truth; that we see in every religion many mythi, *of the generations, incarnations, and apparitions of the gods**—and that they who call Mahomet an impostor, and Zoroaster mad, who

* The history of the creation is a mythus; and very like the mythi of other ancient nations, says Wegscheider (p. 283.) but whether it is a philosophical or historical mythus, authors doubt. See Richhorn Urgeschichte (by Gabler) Nurnberg, 1790—1795. Bauer's Theol. d. A. T. p. 138. Pott. Moses und David Keine Geologen. Berlin, 1799. De Wette Kritik d. Israel. Geschichte (1807.) p. 27. Gesenius in Ersch et Gruber's Allgem. Encyklop. Article Agam. I. p. 358. The mode of creation, history of Paradise, and of God teaching Adam and Eve, are mythi; and it is as absurd to enquire into the site of Paradise, as that of the garden of the Hesperides. See Wegsch. p. 292, and 294. On the improbability of mankind springing from one pair, see Ballenstedt's Urwelt, Part III. p. 41. Ammon's Bibl. Theol. I. p. 282. Meiners's Untersuchungen uber die Verschiedenheit der Menschennaturen. (Tübingen, 1811.) Appearances of angels are mythi. Eckermann Comp. Theol. Christ. 87. Stäudlin Dogmat. und Dogmengesch. p. 230. Ammon Summ. Theol. p. 138. See also Schleierm. Christl. Glaub. I. § 54. The Fall, the Tree of Knowledge, the Serpent, &c. show a mythus, Wegsch. p. 350.

magnetism *) has been even within the last ten

* This is the amiable fancy of Jacobi in his *Geschichte Jesu für denkende und Gemuthvolle Lesern*, published at Gotha in 1816.; and of Richter in his *Christenthum und die ältesten Religion des Orients*. At least, Hohenegger gives extracts from their works to this effect; the works themselves I cannot procure.

laugh at the story of Buddha's generation from a virgin, who conceived him by a rainbow, or at Mahomet's discourses with Gabriel, &c. should not be angry if people examine the stories of Enoch, Moses, Samson, &c. or put the greatest part of what is related of Jesus and the apostles into the class of fables; that the real religion of Christ is rational; but that when he found that men could not be driven from their vices otherwise, he began to assume a supernatural authority, and play the part of a prophet—and afterwards took up that of the Messiah, because some of his admirers thought he must be the person. All this seems, in fact, a mere repetition of the opinion of Cludius, in a work called a 'Primitive View of Christianity,' 1808. And this worthy gentleman held the high office of Superintendent of the Lutheran Church at Hildesheim! In chap. xvii. the author of the book I have been speaking of, enquires whether these last doctrines are really true, and whether Jesus had persuaded himself that he was endowed with supernatural powers; or only took up the character from prudential reasons! Strange to tell (after what he had said before) he decides that it was most probable Jesus had deceived himself, and was really persuaded that he did possess supernatural powers, and thus was an enthusiast in the best sense*. He then tells us (chap. xxvi.) that the Christians were obliged to elevate their founder's mean condition, by won-

* So says Wieland in his *Agathodæmon*. See his works, vol. XXXII. p. 335—355.

years suggested ; from the less daring, however, the

derful stories, and proceeds to examine them. The first mythus is that concerning John the Baptist, who he tells us, certainly existed. But he disbelieves Luke's accounts, that John was related to Christ, or of the same age. It is most likely, he says, that John was older, but that as it was not known who were his relations, or how old he was, but simply that there was such a person, there was an opportunity for this mythus ; and then he considers the different mythi of Christ's birth *, the advent of the magi, the baptism, temptation, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ †.

* This is constantly referred to the fancies of a barbarous age and people, and many instances are given by the writers on this side, of similar stories in other nations. The Ægyptian notions of Apis—the Hindoo of Buddha—the incarnation of Vishnu. See Wegsch. p. 273. Schmidt Bibliothek für Kritik und Exeg. d. N. T. vol. I. Part I. and II. Henke's Mag. V. p. 146. N. Mag. III. 365. V. 91. Stäudlin Dogmatik und Dogmengesch. p. 295. Greiling, Das Leben Jesu v. Nazareth, p. 24.

† It may be said, that I ought not to appeal to such an ignorant, vulgar, and rash writer, as the author of this tract ; but I can see no difference in the principles or the proceedings of many of the writers of this school and his. I would refer to Bauer's long dissertation on the mythi in the Old Testament (at the end of his and Dathe's edition of Glass's Philologia Sacra, a book in every one's hands,) where he gets rid of all that is important in the Old Testament, either in history, or prophecy—to Wegscheider's 42d section, where every thing of a supernatural kind is put on one side, by the same means—to Gabler's edition of Eichhorn's Urgeschichte (1791.) II. p. 481.—to Meyer's Hermeneutica Sacra Vet. Test. (Lubec. 1800.) II. § 215. and a variety of other works. But without appealing to general *declarations*, they who run through any of these works, Wegscheider's for example, will see that this is the *practical* principle on which all is explained, that the miraculous birth of Christ (p. 372.) is treated by these writers, as the fancy of a later age ; that the descent into hell (for which they refer to the spurious gospel of Nicodemus) is considered as a mythus, derived from the notion, that Christ is the Saviour of all, and therefore of the dead (see De Wette's Bibl. Dogm. 258. Bertholdt. Christol. Jud. § 34.) and so of every doctrine relating to Christ's person. See Wegscheider especially, pp. 387—393. Perhaps I could hardly appeal to a stronger passage than one in Bertholdt's Kritisch. Journ. der neuest. Theol. Litt. vol. V. Part III. where the writer says, that Christian mythology must be explained from its analogy with all the politics and religions of antiquity ; that profane and sacred mytho-

answer was always either that it was impossible that

On the resurrection of Christ, the writer says, that though there are doubts and difficulties, and though the apostles constantly assert its truth, the probable story is, that the followers of Jesus enraged at his death, gave it out, that being taken from the power of the wicked, he lived with God, and enjoyed the reward of his virtue—and they represented this life of their Master to themselves and others, in the most glowing colours, and so by degrees, said that he was still living, raised from the dead, and rewarded—that then all the facts were told and believed, and that it was not easy to contradict them, or examine their story (p. 127.) Now Paulus tells us fairly, in his Commentary (III. p. 810.) that Christ did not really die, but suffered a fainting fit. It appears from Döderlein, (Inst. Theol. Christ. II. p. 277. § 241.) who strongly defends the truth of the doctrine, that Bahrdt, (I suppose

logy are as like each other as two eggs; (I ought to say, that my extract was made some time ago, and that I cannot now verify it; the phrase is so vulgar, and the assertion so indecent, that I hope I may have erred); that Christ must be put in the category of Hercules, the Dioscuri, Romulus, and Alexander, and that we can thus get rid of many difficulties in the New Testament, and of whatever is *offensive* in the life of Jesus. The author of the *Briefe über den Rationalismus*, who is picked out by Dr. Bretschneider as one of the most violent Rationalists, is not so bad as some whom I have quoted. But I prefer giving his opinions in the words of Staüdlin (*Geschichte der Rationalism.* p. 306.) He considers Jesus, says Staüdlin, as a mere man, as a product of his people and age, but exceeded by no one in wisdom, virtue and piety. His origin, education and destiny are not clear; and the lives of him are so indefinite and rhapsodical as not to be depended on. Whatever, however, tends to raise his origin above nature is to be referred to the class of mythi, as in the case of other persons. This writer says he can form no idea of the supernatural origin of man; he denies not that there is a *fond de vérité* in the narrations of the circumstances of his life in the N. T. but cannot, like the writers, consider them as miracles. Some may be naturally explained, but he sets no great value on such explanations and prefers leaving these narratives to stand or fall. The resurrection he believes, and can thence only explain the existence and duration of the Christian Church. But how it happened he knows not. He suspects no fraud on the part of his friends. But it seems most probable that God *mediately* produced this revivification. (? the meaning).

there should have been a miracle under such circumstances, or that even allowing Christ to have

in his *Ausführung des plans und Zwecks Jesu*, a book I cannot procure) supposes that Christ really retreated after his supposed death, to some place, known only to his disciples. Semler (*Beantwortung d. fragmente eines ungenannten*, 2d ed. Hall. 1780.) in answer to Reimarus, who in *Lessing's Beiträge aus den Schätzen der Wolfenb. Bibl.*, in the fifth of the celebrated fragments, (*Wolfenb. 1777.*) had denied the truth of the resurrection, says, that it is a poetic mythus to be received in some moral or allegorical sense. See Eberhard's remarks on this, in his *Geist des Urchristenthums*, III. (Halle, 1808,) p. 122. Kaiser (*Bibl. Theol. I. 253.*) has, according to Wegscheider, a different theory, that it is an historico-poetical mythus, made up 'e rebus in facto positis, quæ pro visionibus et revelationibus habitæ fuerunt.' I do not fully understand this expression, at least, I do not see how it can apply to the resurrection. It is not easy to tell Wegscheider's own opinion. In p. 391, he seems to support the common sense of the question, that if the apostles had not seen Christ really restored from the dead, they would not have believed it as firmly as we see they did; but in p. 390, he tells us, that the whole hinge of the business turns on separating the facts, and the method in which the witnesses judged of those facts, and that if this be done, although the miraculous part of the history vanishes, Christ's return to life is not taken away, but when stripped of its mythic dress, still may be piously received as a signal proof that Providence protected Christianity*. He then argues, that the

* His words are, 'Omnino omnis hujus rei cardo in eo vertitur, ut res ipsa in facto posita et ratio eam judicandi atque enarrandi a testibus adhibita recte discernantur.' I have thought it right to give his words, for a reason stated elsewhere, as to other persons of his party, that their Latin is beyond me. And in this case I feel it to be the more necessary, as Stäudlin says positively (*Geschichte*

had the power of working miracles, it was highly improbable that in the particular case alleged, he would have judged it right to exert it ; and secondly, the words were examined, and by every possible dis-

truth of the religion does not depend on this fact ; nay, that it cannot depend on any fact known only to a few people, and by them clothed with the appearance of a miracle, but on the agreement of its principles with right reason ; and that moreover Christ himself afterwards did not build his doctrine on it. There is a passage in Schröckh which states all these proceedings so well, that I cannot but extract it. It is in vol. VII. p. 630. ‘Inspiration,’ says he, ‘was given up—interpolations in Scripture were believed to exist. In the oldest, and partly in more recent history, instead of historical facts, these writers saw only allegories, mythi, philosophical principles, and national history. Where appearances of God, and the angels, or their immediate agency are related, nothing was seen but Jewish images or dreams. Every thing miraculous was explained from natural causes, even the miracles of Jesus. Instead of prophecies fulfilled, all which established any connection between the Old and New Testament was said to be mere accommodation. The Old was degraded in comparison with the New, and all the doctrines of the New were not reckoned of equal value. The explanation of all biblical books was pursued on new principles. The Song of Solomon was not mystical. The Revelations contained no prophecy of the fortunes of the church.’

des Rat. et Sup. p. 306,) that it is Wegscheider’s opinion that Christ did *not* rise from the dead—that the circumstance must be naturally explained—that in short he was not dead, and that we must be careful to separate the fact and the judgment passed on it. It is possible that Wegscheider may have expressed himself more positively in his 5th edition, which was published in 1826. Mine (the 4th) was published in 1824. Eckermann talks of the resurrection being an extraordinary natural circumstance, &c. &c. See Schröckh, VIII. p. 70.

tortion, they were forced into any meaning but their own. The extraordinary part of these discussions is, that those who held somewhat sounder opinions, instead of rejecting such a mass of absurdity at once, allowed themselves to be so far at least affected by the outcry of this many-worded wisdom, as to retire from the ground of miracles as liable to doubts, and to take their stand on the excellence of Christianity itself. Here, although a few bolder and worse than the rest, pointed their attacks against the character and views of the Saviour *, it is only justice to say that this example was not followed, that on the contrary, many who maintained that Christianity was a mere temporary dispensation, that its time was past, and that the world ought to return to natural religion †, still did justice to the Founder of this temporary dispensation, and allowed that his object was the improvement of mankind, that his life and character were pure and holy and blameless. Here

* See a note above in p. 117. Reimarus and Bahrdt were, I presume, the great authorities on this point. Cludius, (a superintendent of the Lutheran Church,) however, held this opinion. See his *Uransichten des Christenthums* (Altona, 1808.) See too Starck's *Philosophical Dialogues*, p. 128—130.

† J. W. Schmidt (*Ueber die Christliche Religion*. Jena, 1797.) maintained that Christianity is not a *positive* religion, and that if it were, it could not be morally and generally useful. See Schröckh VIII. p. 66. This was a favourite notion. See the translation of Theodul's *Gastmahl*, p. 149.

indeed truth was too mighty not to prevail; and though we cannot strictly say of our age, as it has been said of the first ages, that not one of the most violent opponents of Christianity disgraced himself by any imputation on the character of our Saviour, we may still say that such falsehood was by almost all quickly rejected and withstood. A large portion of those, moreover, who considered Christianity merely as a temporary form, seemed to allow that its form and history might always remain as an useful vehicle to convey the great truths of natural religion to the multitude. Accordingly, during these discussions, we find that they employed themselves in investigating the particular doctrines of Christianity, and giving them if not what they deemed their true form, a form more free from falsehood. But into this part of the subject we may fortunately be spared from entering. It will be sufficient to say, that they who wish to form a notion of the Rationalizing method of explaining the doctrines of Scripture as to a Saviour, an atonement and all the consequent doctrines, need only turn to the page of Ecclesiastical history for a record of the various heresies of the early ages, and that they will also find a tolerable picture of them in the most extreme notions * of the most violent English Unitarians.

* We find that Teller, in one or other of his works (from 1764 to 1792) rejected the notion of a Trinity, a vicarious Atonement,

Unitarian opinions were indeed greedily received by those who, perhaps, did not like to go the full

&c. and maintained that the only redemption of which the ancients thought, was a redemption from error and vice. (Schröckh VIII. p. 48.) Henke, in his 'Lineamenta,' (Helmstadt, 1793,) teaches that Christ was a remarkable teacher, distinguished and instructed by God; that inspiration was like what Cicero ascribes to the poets, an *afflatus divinus*—that the doctrine of the Trinity came from Platonism—that the name 'Son of God' is metaphorical, and describes not the nature, but the qualities of Christ—that the personality is ascribed to the Holy Ghost only through a Prosopopœia not uncommon in the New Testament. The chief service of Christ was his doctrine; as a Divine Messenger it was his business to bring forward a new and pure religion, adapted to the wants of all mankind, and give an example of it. His death was necessary to prove his confidence in his own doctrines, and to give an example of perfected virtue. It may be doubted whether baptism was intended for all Christians, and for Christians of all ages, or only for the first Christians, and for converts. (Schröckh VIII. p. 68.) An account of Eckermann's similar belief is given in the next two pages of Schröckh. In his *Handbuch für das Systematische Studium der Christl. Glaubenslehre* (Altona, 1801) 'Eckermann says, that reason has not the power of discovering any certain marks of a supernatural revelation—that there is no one place in the Old Testament which is necessarily a prophecy of the Messiah. It cannot be proved that the Apostles called Jesus God, or attributed divine qualities to him.—St. Paul did not mean to teach any doctrine when he spoke of sin and its punishment as the consequence of Adam's sin, but merely expounded the general benefits of Christianity in a Jewish method. A belief in Christ is not wholly groundless though we should not believe in his resurrection. No

lengths which I have been detailing, and who flattered themselves that in this middle course they paid due

doubt the Evangelists took it for a miracle, but it cannot be proved that God ought to have hindered them from looking at an extraordinary natural event as a miracle, or that the return of Jesus to life may not be entirely explained on natural grounds.' Schröckh VIII. p. 70. Cannabich, who was a Superintendent (one of the highest dignities in the Lutheran church), attacked the doctrines of the Trinity, Original Sin, Justification, the Satisfaction of Christ, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, as taught in his own church. The attack was made in a work called *Kritik alter und neuer Lehren der Christlichen Kirche* (Zerbst and Leipsic 1792.) See Schröckh VIII. p. 206. and Starck's *Theodul's Gastmahl* (in the English translation, called *Philosophical Dialogues on the re-union of the different Christian Communions*), p. 142. For the opinions of Plank and others on original sin and other doctrines, see this latter work, p. 145—148. Wegscheider (p. 274. et seq.) says, that the Trinity, Incarnation and Descent of the Spirit are positively absurd, and (p. 277 and 370—2.) that Christ was a mere man. The doctrine of the Trinity was not made up or established (p. 275.) for nearly the three first ages, p. 351. (So Cannabich says that it is a new doctrine without foundation, and contrary to reason, and that it may be removed.) The doctrine of the Fall, and of Original Sin, is set aside by Wegscheider (p. 350.) entirely; one reason is given, which is curious. EXCEPT ST. PAUL, no sacred writer clearly makes mention of it. The references on this section are curious. Bauer's *Mythologie*, d. A. u. N. T. p. 90. Hesiod's *Works and Days*, v. 59. *Zendavesta* abridged in Kleuker, vol. ii, p. 113, and Gesenius *Art. Adam*. in the *Encyclop. of Ernst and Gruber*, I. p. 360. ! As to the notions of our redemption, God has always

homage to the supremacy of reason, while they still retained somewhat of Christianity. It is curious to observe that the common principle of rejecting every thing above reason, has conducted the learning of the German, and the gross ignorance of the English schools to the same point of absurdity.

To what has been already said, I think I need hardly add, that all notions of the value of a church, and the importance of any Church Rites, were

raised men up to repress vice and encourage virtue, as especially Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Zeno, Seneca, Marcus Antoninus, Zoroaster, Confucius and Mahomet, but among all, the greatest reverence is due to Jesus the Nazarene, &c. &c. pp. 356, 357, and note. In § 128, p. 383, it is expressly acknowledged that in Scripture, literally understood, there are some grounds (semina) for the orthodox doctrine as to the union of two natures in Christ, yet as such a doctrine is of no use to the attainment of virtue, but rather prejudicial, by diminishing the force of Christ's example, as it contradicts reason, and some other declarations of Scripture, it is better to adopt the other side of the question. P. 389, all the notions of Christ's glorification are either without ground, or mythi. In § 142, all notion of his atonement is renounced. It appears unnecessary to go through the whole of the doctrines usually taught by the orthodox churches, as it is obvious that after these principles, the whole exposition of doctrine is, and must be, Socinian at least. Some of the decent and decorous Rationalists are pleased to call the orthodox scheme *Theologia Agnina* or *Sanguinaria*, with reference to our Lord's death on the cross. See Ackermann's *Libert. Evang. Vindiciæ*, p. 24.

wholly given up. It will be sufficient to cite one declaration on this point, as it is made by a person whom I have been reproached for not reckoning among the warmest supporters of the Christian cause. It is Planck, who fairly tells us, that though Christ saw that a church would arise in course of time, and though he most probably might wish it might be so, yet he never intended that the teachers of that church should appear in the world as a visible society, or united by any external tie, but he wished them to confine themselves to an union by the moral ties of union of mind, affections, inclinations, intentions and hopes. Baptism, he adds, and the Eucharist *, are not essential articles of external worship, nor a necessary condition for forming an intimate external connexion †. I could add still stronger declarations; I could shew that the Ration-

* This is exactly the doctrine of Wegscheider. He says (p. 488.) that the notion of the absolute necessity of Baptism is now got rid of, but it is all very well to keep the ceremony, which is a sort of introduction to the society of Christians, and the advantages it offers (p. 486.), that it is very right too to keep Confirmation, that when a person comes to a proper age, he may settle whether he will remain a Christian, or go into some other society. The Communion is not very well fitted (p. 514.) even as a symbolical rite, to the feelings of modern times, yet may be put to a moral purpose, and should be more frequently used.

† See Planck, Ueber die Trennung und Wiedervereinigung, p. 10. (Tübingen, 1803.)

alists have even said that there will probably be no question much longer of any Baptism or Holy Supper. But I am contented with shewing how the matter was treated by those esteemed somewhat removed from the extremes of Rationalism.

As the Rationalists professed, though they discarded Christianity to put the highest value on morality, in fact to reduce Christianity to a mere moral system, there is another part of the subject on which it may be right to say a few words, viz. the tone of morality assumed by the Rationalist writers. But on this point, I prefer using the words of another person to inserting any observations of my own. I must candidly own, at the same time, that I have not observed any such doctrines commonly held forth in the Rationalist works, as the reader will presently see. I must own also, that for reasons stated below, I * do

* Starck, according to his French biographer, was converted to Romanism, and read his recantation at Paris very early in life, but did not disclose this fact. On the contrary, he returned into Germany and accepted of various situations in the Protestant Church. Among others, he held that of Court-Preacher at Darmstadt. He perpetually, however, published books favourable to the cause of the Romanists, and at length was suspected, and openly accused. 'Il se montra superieur,' says his biographer, 'a ces declamations,' i. e. he persevered in his plan of holding Protestant offices while he was a Papist. One of his works, called Theodul's Gastmahl, which was a series of con-

not attach any great value to the *opinions* of the author whom I quote. But, in the present case, he professes to state *facts*, and to support his statements by quotations. If he has been honest in those quotations, (and I can hardly think that under his circumstances he could venture on the dishonesty of misquotation,) the facts he alleges are most striking, and the utter degradation of moral tone in the writers who had renounced the Christian faith, is a phenomenon well worth deep regard. Starck then makes the following remarkable statements as to the morality enforced by some of the Rationalists. 'I have actually perceived that those same divines who have placed the essence of religion so entirely in morality as to forget, or eliminate, by little and little, all the

versations professedly on the possibility of a reunion of the different Christian Churches, but in reality on the evils of Protestantism, with an especial reference to the (abuse of it in the) late systems of Rationalism, went through five editions in German, and was subsequently translated by Kenzinger into French, and by an anonymous translator into English. It is rather curious to observe the artifice made use of by the translator, unquestionably a Romanist. In the title page the author is described as 'Protestant Minister, and first preacher to the Court of Darmstadt,' nor is a word said in the preface with relation to his change, so that the Protestant reader is taken entirely by surprise. The Romanists have certainly no belief in the adage as to the good policy of honesty. Starck and his translator are apt illustrations of the assertion.

fundamental truths of faith, now attack morality itself, and attempt to shake it in every way. When the divinity of the Scriptures and the necessity of a belief in its truths are denied, it is impossible but that the morality deduced from it must also suffer. What esteem can be paid for the maxims of a religion, the founder of which, according to the notions of modern Protestants, was nothing but a magician and an enthusiast, giving himself a name and qualities that he did not possess, suffering his actions to be transformed into miracles, and consequently adding falsehood to fanaticism *. What regard could be had for the maxims of a religion preached by men full of prejudices, who did not even understand their master, and whose writings known under their names (?) are falsely attributed to them ? Read the first and third number of the second part of the Magazine of the late Hencke of Helmstadt, and the third number of the first part of his Eusebia, and you will there find that “ monogamy, and the prohibition of extra-matrimonial connexions, must be reckoned among the remains of monachism, that this doctrine rests on a blind faith †.” Is it possible to give greater facility to every species of disorder ?

* Compare these very just remarks with what I have said above, p. 76.

† Starck justly says, that whether Hencke wrote this or not, he has at least the merit of publishing it.

One of your journalist theologians, Scherer, has not hesitated to declare, in the first Number, page 6, of the preface of his 'Biblical Investigator,' that "Religion has nothing at all to do with duties." What dreadful consequences may be drawn from such a maxim!—Hear what the Superintendent* Cannabich says in his Criticism of Practical Christian doctrine, p. 185. "A moderate sensual enjoyment of love out of marriage, is no more immoral than in marriage." He adds, that "it is to be avoided merely because it shocks the customs of the persons with whom we live, and that (because) the excesses committed in it are often punished by the loss of reputation and of health." Does this moralist appear sufficiently indulgent†? I must repeat that I am here giving the statement of another and not my own; and I must add, in common justice, that it cannot be believed that many even of the most violent of the Rationalists could hold such monstrous doctrines. But it still cannot be thought or spoken of otherwise, than as a most remarkable fact, that men in the situation of Henke and Cannabich should venture to put forth such impudent profligacy, and not be at once overwhelmed by the indignation of all their countrymen.

* This office, as I have said above, is one of the highest in the Lutheran Church.

† Starck's Philosophical Dialogues, p. 152—154.

It will perhaps have occurred to some persons in the course of this review of the naturalizing school of divines in Germany, that such doctrines must have been entirely esoteric; that they formed merely the subject of discussion among the teachers, but could never be brought forward in their public instructions*. But however much one might be inclined to hope that men would at all events have allowed some years of private reflection to pass over their new system before they propounded it in public, that they would not have been wild and wicked enough to bring forward, crude, and undigested, such a direct subversion of every idea which had been held holy and sacred before, that assuredly was not the case. I speak not here of the published dissertations which might be said to be too abstruse for the public—I speak not again merely of the popular treatises, where these doctrines are propounded†, though to them the appeal is just and fair—but I assert on the faith of public and recorded, as well as private testimonies, that these doctrines were publicly taught

* Such duplicity could not be defended.

† Mr. Pusey mentions that there were unchristian publications *manufactured for the lower classes*, though he thinks they gained little access among them (p. 180.) The *Evan. Kirchen-Zeitung* just quoted, mentions weekly publications at Hamburg, expressly intended to enlighten the common people, and to teach them that *positive* religion is the mere creation of absurdity.

from the pulpit. Nay, I have not seen any contradiction to this from any of the party themselves, except as to the generality of the usage*. They allow its frequency, though they attempt to show that the indifference to religion, which they all allow exists in their church, is not imputable to that cause. But this is not all—They allow too that this wretched mass of abomination was offered to the young† in the

* Mr. Pusey (p. 180.) mentions that he had himself heard more than one sermon founded on Rationalist principles and stating incidentally rationalist views, though the congregation did not perceive it; that in several cases where these principles were more prominently promulged, the congregations by their own biblical knowledge, were able to correct them, and in some cases demanded the removal of the preacher. Bretschneider, as the reader will see by a citation from him below, mentions the fact, that the change in opinions extended to the sermons, and that the Rationalist principles were taught in the pulpit, while some of the Rationalists (in compliance by the way with their recorded opinions) preached upon the useful topics of agriculture, &c. &c. So we find in Denmark, that during the Rationalist period there, the pulpits resounded with these wretched doctrines. The history of Rationalism in Denmark is most curious, as an illustration of what happened in Germany. It will be found in a series of papers in the *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung* for Dec. 1827. July 1828. and August 1828.

† In the *Darmstadt Kirchen-Zeitung*, No. 128 (1827), is an ordinance of the Consistory of Münster, in which complaint is made of the teachers of schools for the lower orders, on account of their declaring themselves against the positive doctrines of

shape of religious instruction. And the real fact is, that in the Gymnasia *, the public instructors detailed to the tender years of childhood all that they could comprehend of it †, and the lesson was re-

Christianity, and allowing themselves in their schools to oppose the System of the Church.

* Here of course I must appeal only to private testimony, and it may be said that it can only be *partial*. Still I may be allowed to say, that I have heard from many most respectable Germans, that in the schools and gymnasia, which they attended, the miracles were treated with the most entire contempt by the teachers, and epitomes of Scripture on a philosophical plan were introduced. Indeed I have made farther enquiries since the first edition appeared, and they have established fully the correctness of my assertion. But, in good truth, my adversaries know that I have only asserted what was going on before their own eyes for years, and what every German remembers. It is, therefore, not very honest to take advantage of my not doing what I could most assuredly do, if propriety did not forbid it, namely, bring forward an ample number of instances with *place* and *name*. I observe that in an article on the religious condition of Hamburgh, in the *Evang. Kirchen-Zeitung* (for Dec. 1827, p. 358.) there is an especial notice of the Deistical instruction practised in almost all schools there.

† In Gesenius's *Lesebuch*, expressly intended for the *second and third classes of boys*, we find plenty of noxious matter. Prefixed to the first extract (Gen. i. 2, 3.) is a remark, that this passage contains the descriptions of a sage of antiquity as to the origin of the earth, set forth in an historical dress; that that narrator has a very imperfect knowledge of nature, though his description is sublime; that he can hardly be the first inventor

peated by the pastor, when according to the custom of the Lutheran church, the young were sent to him

of the description, as the principal outlines of it, and even the six works of creation are to be found in other religions of the East; that probably he only accommodates the general tradition of the East to the national opinions of the Hebrews, a remark which applies especially to his ascribing a mystic origin to the Sabbath, a festival peculiar to the Jews.—Can any one say that such remarks are required, before a set of extracts in a ‘Hebrew Reader,’ that they are fit for such a work, or, embracing as they do a vast field of inquiry, in which very many will think that Gesenius has found nothing but absolute falsehood, that they are fit for the use of boys in the second and third classes? Can the *animus* here be mistaken? I am happy to hear that in a forthcoming translation into English of Gesenius’s Grammar and Reader, made by an excellent Oriental scholar, all this wretched trash will be omitted. Some notion of the state of education in the Rationalist period, and of the anxiety to remove all *prejudices* may be got by reference to a strange book called Glanzow’s *Critik der Schulen* (Bremen, 1824.) p. 77.

There is a work of Ammon’s, called *Christlicher Religionsunterricht für die gebildete Jugend* (2d Ed. Erlangen, 1812), written at a period of the worthy author’s career, when, I suppose, he was wavering between his old and his present notions. He tells the young people to whom this work is directed, that the Books of the Old Testament have no divine worth or character for us, except so far as they agree with the spirit of the Gospel (p. 7.), but deserve attention; that as to the books of the New Testament, much in them (p. 10.) must be figuratively understood, or has no immediate relation to our times. Then in noticing the positive doctrines of Christianity, while with some

previously to the holy rite of Confirmation, to receive from the minister of God's word those solemn lessons

art he adheres to the phraseology of other Christians, he contrives to explain away every one, and reduce Christ to a mere excellent man.

Dinter (well known for many theological works, and formerly a preacher in Saxony, now upper counsellor for the school department in East Prussia) has lately (in 1824) put forth a Bible for the use of teachers, of which above 30,000 copies have been sold, especially among preachers and teachers, and which is highly extolled by the Rationalist writers. I mention this to show his influence. In his various works for schools, among other doctrines, Dinter speaks of the imperfect notions of former times as to God, angels, and miracles, and gives teachers directions how to conduct themselves cleverly in their schools in such matters, and afterwards gives plans of catechizing in agreement with the principles he recommends. For example, there are to be two ways of catechizing about Jonah, one before an audience not yet *sufficiently enlightened*, and where *all remains in its old state*, another for places *which have more light*. Again, in the prophecies as to the Messiah, a double explanation is given for the same reason; one is the old orthodox way, the other a more probable neological plan. A clever teacher is to choose himself, a dull one may ask the parish clergyman how far he may go. See *Evang. Kirchen-Zeitung* for Jan. 1828. p. 35*.

* It appears (*ibid.* p. 19.), from examination of his other writings, that while he allows that Christianity is a revelation, it is a revelation subject to the earlier and greater revelation in the reason, and is only an authoritative declaration of the truths which the reason would discover *a priori*, viz. God, virtue and immortality; that (*ibid.* p. 20, 21.) in his opinion the revelation of God in nature is nearer to the comprehension of the people, and less liable to mistakes than God's word—that in old times, when a man's character would have made him

which were to prepare them for their first attendance at the Holy Communion of their Saviour's body and blood, and for the busy scenes of worldly temptation on which they were about to enter. The most moderate of all the printed instructions for Confirmation which I have happened to see inculcate pure Unitarianism *. But there are other books for the young, where the attacks on Christianity which I have been detailing, were too plainly stated to be misunderstood, and where a virulence truly infamous was shown in raking together all the most distorted views and false representations of the plans and purposes of our Lord and his apostles. And this was the food given to the young heart to feed on—to nourish it up to all the duties, all the aspirations, all the hopes, all the holiness of an immortal being †.

* Leitfaden bei dem Religionsunterricht der Konfirmanden Von. C. Ch. G. Zerrenner, Prediger der Kirche zum Heil. Geist zu Magdeburg. Leips. 1808. (bei Barth.) The friend who happened to have this by him, told me that he had seen several which went the full length of the school, and even treated the resurrection as a fable.

† I will give one specimen of a work of this kind. It is from the third part of an 'Universal History for the Young,' by Becker. I saw the second edition corrected—printed at Berlin in 1806. One of the symptoms of improvement of which I have heard with

worthy of a divine inspiration, people looked on all he said as inspired—and he might sometimes believe it himself—that in Scripture are many obscure ideas on which there is not such clear philosophy as ours displayed, &c. &c.

I cannot but add a single word as to the persons who were conspicuous in this career of absurdity and

pleasure, is, that in a later edition of this book, the chapter on Christianity is omitted, and a new one inserted. 'Jesus,' says the author, (p. 433, and following) 'probably got the first notion of his undertaking from being a friend of John, and going often to his father's, who was a priest; and from the Gospels it appears, that the sight of the feasts, and of the crowd of worshippers, had a great effect upon him. It is doubtful, whether Jesus and John were sent into Egypt for their education, or were taught by the Essenes, and then sent into Palestine as ambassadors of that sect, with secret support, and according to an arranged plan!' And this for the young! P. 455, and following. 'The indications of the Messiah in the Old Testament had produced great effect on Jesus and John, who were both *têtes exaltées* (*feuerkopfen*), such as destiny raises for some great purpose, &c. We are in danger therefore of judging them unjustly, especially from the great mixture of high and low, clear and obscure in them.' Becker says, he will not undertake to fix Jesus's character, but will merely collect the fragments of it from his *wretched* biographers. The friends had great mutual esteem, but John saw in Jesus a higher spirit than his own. Both had the same hatred of the priests, their pride and hypocrisy—both thought the Mosaic Law no longer fit for the time, and that the notion of a national god * was the source of all the evil in Judæa. After long meditation, they decided that Jesus must be the Messiah; and

* This is a favourite notion of many of these writers. Lüders (a professor at Göttingen) in the *Geschichte der vornehmsten Völker der alten Welt*, published at Brunswick in 1800, says that Jehovah was only one of the many gods of Paganism; and Jänisch, a preacher at Berlin, in the *Universalischer überblick der Entwicklung der Menschengeschlechts*, Berlin, 1801, says that Jehovah was only a household god of Abraham.

wickedness. It must be a matter of deep regret that such a remark can be made with truth ; but as I

John found *the part of a precursor* fixed for him. Christ, partly from his power of attraction, and partly from *the hope of future power*, made his disciples depend blindly on him. He could only undertake his great work of destroying the priests with great caution. The people were divided into sects, and the characteristic of his, was his choice of the *lowest* people, and his withdrawing himself frequently from public view, that the priests might not nip his plan in the bud.

As all the prophets had worked miracles, and many were expected from the Messiah ; Jesus was obliged to undertake them, or to renounce his hopes. And, no doubt, he did miracles, for the power of the mind on the body is such, that we need not doubt his curing the melancholy and nervous. As to the miraculous meals, raising the dead, curing the blind and deaf, *that must be attributed to the calculation of his historians*, and we need not hesitate in doing so, after observing *such tangible fabrications*, as in Matt. xiv. 23. (Christ's walking on the sea), xxi. 19. (his blasting the fig-tree), Luke viii. 32, and 46. (devils driven into the swine, and virtue going out of Jesus.) In the story of Lazarus, we cannot help suspecting *some secret concert*.

' He did, however, some uncontested miracles,' (what does Becker mean ?) ' and there was in his manner *that inexpressible something which makes great men irresistible*. The mystic obscurity thrown over his future kingdom, the many parables he used, and his assured manner of speaking of future things, begat reverence.' The prudence of his judgments, &c. the strictness of his life, &c. command Becker's praise.

He could pursue only very slowly the destruction of old usages, first he allowed neglect of the sabbath, &c. and at last made open

have been reproached with noticing attacks on religion in Germany, which were considered only in the same light as the attempts of Carlile and Hone in this country *, it is necessary to observe that the majority of the writers to whom I allude were in their day the first in station in the Church and Universities, and obtained the greatest notice and reputation among their contemporaries. It is a little unfortunate for the remark to which I allude that the persons whom I have brought forward as the formost of the Rationalists are precisely those

war with the priests, 'on whom he lanced all the thunder of a Ciceronian eloquence!'

'John's death made him very timid; he got away into the desert, and ordered his followers not to call him Messiah in public. In his last journey to Jerusalem, the multitude protected him by day, and he got away at night. His answers made to several questions at this time (as John viii. 3.) *are still admired!* He had always suspected Judas, and as he had a presentiment that he should come to a bad end, became very uneasy, and yet was able to exhort his disciples. He did not really die on the cross. Whenever recognized by his disciples afterwards, he went away directly, and came unexpectedly, and for a short time; at last he disappeared quickly, and let himself be seen no more. This end, like that of Lycurgus, produced many followers. By degrees, all the tales of the crucifixion were extended, and a Christian mythology erected!'

* See Mr. Pusey's Preface.

whom the most considerable of the Church historians of Germany, Schröckh, produces in his history of the past and present century. I have purposely gone over a large part of Schröckh's work lately, and have given many extracts from it, in order to shew that he thought the persons whom I have noticed so considerable as to analyse their works, and give a view of their literary characters. When I recite the names of Semler, Bahrtdt, Cannabich, Henke, Bauer, Eckermann, Schmid of Jena, Paullus, Eichhorn, Ammon, De Wette, Wegscheider, Tieftrunk, with many others, I feel at least sure that they who know any thing of the history of theology in Germany for some years past will know that these men occupied the largest share of public attention in their class and time, and that they were not mere vulgar retailers of blasphemy, despised by all the decent part of mankind. I must add moreover in contradiction to another statement made with respect to these persons, that with very few exceptions they were Ministers of the Gospel, Professors of Theology, or Lecturers in Divinity.

The reader will observe that I have, for reasons already stated, chosen to give a view of the opinions of the Rationalists on the various points of theology without consideration of the order in which those

opinions rose. For my purpose, (i. e. for the purpose of exhibiting the actual state of Protestantism) this plan appears the best, while for those who wish to trace the *causes* and progress of rationalism, a greater attention to chronology would of course be desirable *. But there is one point connected with the history of that progress on which it seems necessary to say a few words. I mean the influence of *Kant*, in encreasing the tendency to Rationalism. It has been sometimes absurdly said that his philosophy gave rise to that state of religious opinion. But his first work appeared only in 1781, while the works of Basedow, Steinbart, Bahrdt, and many others had been published previously. If we look indeed to the famous 'Religions-edikt †' published by Frederick William II. of Prussia, in 1788, we find the king saying that he had *long* observed the strange licentiousness of the Protestant ministers in matters of doctrine, their rejection of many Christian

* In order in some degree to meet their wants I have given a table at the end of the volume of the principal writers in Germany during the last century, with such dates as I could gain from common sources of information.

† See Schröckh VIII. p. 200. *Neuesten Religion begebenheiten mit anmerkungen für das Jahr, 1788.* p. 625. *Acten, Urkunden, and Nachrichten zur Neuesten Kirchengeshichte.* Vol. i. p. 461.

doctrines, their assumption of a tone contrary to the spirit of true Christianity, their revival of the long exploded errors of Socinians, Deists, Naturalists, &c. their spreading them among the people under the misused name of explanation, their endeavour to do away all value for the Bible, and to bring the doctrines of Christianity into contempt with the people *. It is needless to observe that such a state of things could not be the work of six or seven years, but must have taken its origin long before the time of Kant. What influence his philosophy actually had on the state of theology is another question. It is stated by Schröckh that the first divine who handled dogmatics on the principles of Kant and his scholars was Staüdlin in a work called *Ideen zur Kritik des Systems der Christlichen Religion*. (Göttingen, 1791.) Staüdlin, however, was not a blind follower of Kant, but, says Schröckh, thought much and deeply for himself. He was joined by Tieftrunk in his *Censur des Christlich-Protestantischen Lehrbegriffs nach*

* It may be well to mention here, that the king threatened to punish these proceedings—that an examination-board was established at Berlin in 1791—a scheme of examination laid down for candidates for the ministry—and measures for a general Catechism taken. All this ceased on the death of the king in 1797. See the *Neuesten Religion-begebenheiten* for 1791. p. 139. for 1794. p. 501.

den Principien der Religionskritik (Berlin, 1791), by Schmidt of Jena, in his work called Ueber die Christliche Religion, (Jena 1797), and by Ammon in his Entwurf einer Wissenschaftlich-praktischen Theologie (Göttingen, 1797.) These writers, says Schröckh, applied the Critical System much more fully and connectedly to dogmatical views and doctrines than Staüdlin. I know not whether any other theological work * professed to make the same attempt. But it was certainly an important matter that by this philosophy the Rationalists were tempted to endeavour to give a definite and scientific shape to their previously indefinite and unscientific views. I agree with Mr. Pusey† in thinking that in the end this was an advantage for the good cause, because as soon as Rationalism attempted to construct a theory, its own weakness and the superiority of Revelation could not but be discovered. But for the time there is no doubt that the direct effects of the Kantian philosophy was to strengthen the hands of the Rationalists‡. They lived and

* Many systems of Christian morals were written on Kant's principle. Schmidt of Jena especially asserts that the New Testament was entirely written on Kant's principles. See Schröckh VIII. 120—127. I am speaking here of dogmatics.

† P. 164.

‡ On its indirect effects some remarks will be found below. Reinhard says of the philosophy of Kant, that it had great merit in attacking the Empirics for their superficial views, and the Ration-

flourished by talk and clamour, and appeal to names and authorities, and the very fact that any appeal could be made, whether justifiable or not, to the growing name of Kant as enlisted on their side, and to his philosophy as identifying itself rather with their views than with those of the ancient orthodox party, was triumph and strength. Of course the triumph was increased by Kant's own work on religion, called 'Die Religion innerhalb die Gränzen der reinen Vernunft,' and published at Königsberg in 1793.

In that book, indeed, Kant takes up the cause of Scripture, and expresses himself in terms of respect and anxiety for the ancient and orthodox belief. But it must be evident to any one who attends to it, that when he speaks of original sin, of redemption, and the other parts of the Christian scheme, he merely retains the words, and attaches quite new meanings to them. Indeed to make his theology agree with Scripture, he recommends an entirely new system of Moral Interpretation, as he calls it.

alists for their arrogance, in setting before the Dogmatics the want of security of their principles, and before the Sceptics their want of all principles, in making the Sectaries feel their want of impartiality, and the Eclectics the arbitrariness of their proceedings, and that it endeavoured to give to morality the dignity of which low and interested principles had deprived it. Reinhard Præf. to his System der Christl. Moral. Vol. I. p. xi. 3d edit.

This is his account of it *. ‘To unite the foundations of a moral faith with empiric faith, (be it an end or only a means,) an exposition of the revelation handed down to us is required ; that is, such an interpretation as agrees with the common practical rules of a pure religion of reason. For the theoretic part of church faith cannot interest us morally, unless it act for the fulfilment of all human duties which make the essential part of religion. This interpretation may often appear forced, when we look at the text, and *sometimes may be so* ; and yet, if it is possible that the text admits it, it must be preferred to such a literal one, as contains nothing absolute for morality, or works almost in opposition to its motives†.

* Kant. Die Religion innerhalb den Gränzen der blossen Vernunft. Königsberg, 1793. p. 150.

† Mr. Pusey has given the following instances of the application of this theory :—‘ According to this theory, the doctrine of the Trinity became symbolical of the three fundamental points of universal religion, that there is a holy law-giver, a holy benefactor, a holy retributor ; the doctrine that “ the blood of Christ makes us pure,” yielding, according to the views of this school, no practical results, the blood as containing the vital principle, was to be explained of the life, and the meaning of the expression was to be, that when, through a community of life with Christ, his life had penetrated and united itself with ours, and we had conformed ours to his, we became pure. The moral practical feeling, or tact, was in each case to supply the practical result, where the point in revelation did not furnish it ; none such being e. g. to be obtained, according to these theorists, from the curses

It will be found that such has always been the case with all old and new faiths, partly drawn up in books. Nor can such interpretations be accused of dishonesty, supposing that it is not maintained that the sense we give to the symbolical books, and even to Scripture, was entirely in their view, but that this is undecided; and that only the possibility of their having this sense is asserted. For even the reading of the Scripture, or enquiring about its contents, has the aim of making men better. The historical part which does not contribute to this, may be dealt with as people please.' In one word, we are to find out what he thinks a good moral sense of Scripture, and make the words of Scripture agree with it by the most violent straining of its meaning. There are some very sensible remarks on this subject in Schröckh *, in which the entirely arbitrary nature of this theory is shewn; and that at best it should be called *an application*, not *an exposition* of Scripture. There was indeed a warm contest, as appears from Schröckh, whether this *moral* sense, as Kant called it, was not merely a mystic, or allegoric sense; and for this side of the question Bauer † declared himself. Whatever name might be given to the interpretation, it

upon David's enemies, this moral tact was to perceive that under these enemies were designated his passions.

* Vol. VII. p. 630.

† I recommend his chapter on the subject to the reader's at-

meant in fact only that Scripture was to be adapted to Kant's views, and there was, therefore, no reason why it should not be so to those of any other philosopher.

Few greater evils could be done to the cause of Scripture than this, for whether Kant's system and explanations stood or fell, he had at least set the example of making Scripture the glass in which any and every philosophy was to be reflected, the dress which was to adapt itself to every shape dictated by the varying taste and views of the human mind. Kant's own interpretation did not stand; the Rationalists found the historical system of interpretation better adapted to their views, and though all of them may not have set aside the Kantian system as concisely and contemptuously as Wegscheider does *, they all did set it aside. I am inclined to believe that one or two celebrated works of more modern times are written entirely on Kant's plan of forcing Scripture to take what appearance the au-

tention. (Bauer's edition of Glass's Phil. Sacr. vol. II. Sect. 2. Part I. Sect. 1. § 10.)

* Wegscheider says (Proleg. c. iii. § 25.) *Omni modo fugienda est quæcunque librorum SS. interpretatio allegorica, sensum inferens, nec efferens, qualis jam a Philone, Origine, et nostris temporibus sub alia quadam forma a Kantio, Fichtio, aliisque commendata est.*

thor chooses, and so to suit a regular system of philosophy; but at all events, we may trace the consequences of his system and the force of his example on this point in the interpretation of detached passages of Scripture, or rather their misinterpretation to suit a given purpose.

There are still a few observations and statements, and a few I trust not unimportant inferences to be drawn from them, which I hope to present in my next chapter. I shall conclude the present with a remark on the main point which we have been considering, the notion, namely, on which the whole of this system rests, that all the positive and peculiar doctrines of Christianity are merely temporary in their nature and intention, mere accommodations and compliances with the feelings, hopes and notions of the people to whom they were addressed. Now in itself, this notion of the appointment of institutions adapted to the nature and necessities of man, and their abrogation when they have fulfilled their destined purpose, is, I think, perfectly consistent with our poor notions of perfect wisdom. But the application of this supposition to Christianity in any part except its form is entirely groundless. That to the Jew, truth should be recommended in the *manner* which the Jew would most strongly feel, and that it was so in the gospels, cannot be denied, but that proves not

that the truth itself is adapted to the Jew alone *. It is only however by this confusion of the form with the contents of the system, that I can account for this favourite supposition of the Rationalizing divines. For in whatever way Christianity may be considered, it sets forth its own claims plainly and irresistibly as a system of enduring truths. The dispensation which is to pass away supposes man in a low and degraded state, and seeks to influence him for a time, to lead him on to a higher moral state, and to

* With respect to this accommodation-theory, I cannot but add, that however ingeniously supported by the selection of instances, however finely woven the web may be, it is broken at once by the simple perusal of the New Testament. The decided conviction on every man's mind, before such a theory is brought under his notice, is, I feel assured, that Christ instead of seeking favour and reception for his doctrines, by bowing to popular opinions, perpetually exposed himself to misrepresentation, and sometimes to danger, by his uncompromising opposition to them—that there is no feature in his character more remarkable than his rejection and bold condemnation of every favourite tradition, and every popular principle, which he thought injurious. In morals, in speculation, in faith, almost every word he said must have shocked the prejudices, and wounded the feelings of some of his hearers, not only by implication, but very frequently by the bold and severe rebukes directly addressed to them. I can never indeed think of the theory of accommodation without wonder, that men who are at least ingenious and enquiring, should have adopted what, it appears to me, a very brief enquiry, must teach all to reject.

fit him to answer a higher and nobler call. It will address itself to the temporal and the sensible, it will excite present hopes and fears, it will teach man to live by sight only. But is there any thing like this in Christianity? On the contrary, it speaks only to the spirit of man; it points his hopes and fears to a state of things which is unseen, and the great, nay, the only principle by which it seeks to actuate him is the spiritual principle of faith. If such a dispensation be a temporary and transitory one, what shall be the nature of that dispensation which shall endure; to what principle in man higher than the spirit shall it address itself; to what higher state of things than the house not made with hands shall it point his looks and his hopes? The natural and temporal which was first did pass away, but the spiritual which was afterward must abide for ever. So much for the principle on which Christianity rests its appeal to man. But in its doctrines themselves is there any thing of temporary or perishable? Let reason boast itself as it will, let its researches be as deep and its objects as lofty as its warmest advocates can make them, Christianity will not yield to it here. If reason tells us that we are the subjects of an everlasting destiny, it is on that everlasting destiny that Christianity addresses us; if reason busies itself in searching into our future existence, it is on that existence that Christianity professes to inform us; if

reason teaches man his weakness and urges him to seek a remedy, that he may rise to an higher exaltation of wisdom and of virtue, the lesson is confirmed by Christianity, the remedy is offered, the exaltation is promised. If man is for ever in this world to continue the same, born with the same nature, tempted with the same passions, liable to fall through the same licentiousness of an obstinate will, the dispensation which offers an unfailing and unfading remedy, and an ever-ready assistance, may be arraigned as false, but it cannot be laid aside as transitory. If while man is man, the fear of that unknown state to which he is hastening will always haunt the bed of death and the hour of dissolution, is that to be esteemed a passing doctrine which first promised man that the dust and the grave should not hold him, which pointed and ever will point to the first-fruits of the dead as an eternal and enduring ground of confidence in the promise? Last of all, but of all the greatest, as long as reason points out the purity and justice of God, and the voice of repentant sin mourns with unavailing bitterness, its loss of hope, its separation from God, and its fear of his dreadful wrath, shall the dispensation which for ever blots out the curse, the guilt, the bitterness, and brings man back into the everlasting arms of mercy again, shall that be called a passing shadow, a system to be laid aside and forgotten? No! while man

endures, so long shall endure too the word which binds together sin and its Redeemer, the Saviour and the world he came to save. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but that word shall not pass away.

CHAPTER V.

HAVING now given a sketch, though a very rapid and imperfect one, of the progress of the naturalizing school in Germany, it may perhaps appear right and necessary, that some account should be likewise offered of the effect of their doctrines. For it will be said, that such doctrines could hardly be taught by the public instructors of youth, and by the public preachers of, at least, the more remarkable towns in a country so filled with them, without producing great changes in men's opinions on the value of religion, and by consequence, great changes in moral conduct. But the task thus imposed would be one of great difficulty and danger. Nothing can be more rash, more improper, more unchristian, than lightly to bring forward sweeping charges of a want of morality. To judge with accuracy indeed of the tone of public morality in one's own country, is neither an easy, nor trifling matter; and to judge of its state in another, requires a mass of evidence, so great in extent, and so precise and particular in its nature, as can in very few instances be hoped for. The great variety of national character and dispo-

sition, must always be taken largely into account in weighing the practical effect of opinions, and an accurate knowledge and judgment of this preliminary step, pre-supposes the greatest nicety, and the widest extent of observation. The evidences as to the real state of things to be found in the narration of the passing traveller, mistaken frequently, perhaps, as to facts, and still more mistaken as to the fair inference to be drawn from them, can be of little avail. But still something may perhaps be gathered from an union of the probabilities of the case, with such positive evidence as may actually exist. As to the probability of the case, it will not, I think, be a rash judgment to say, that the constant collision of very wild opinions, very wildly produced and defended, would at length either so entirely weary the mind, as to leave little feeling on the subject so strong as an entire repugnance, or at least indifference to the farther agitation of the question; or it would beget a strong feeling of hatred to the principle of these opinions and discussions, and a violent adherence to some opposite and counteracting ones. The two effects which appear probable, have really occurred. As to the existence of a widely-spread indifference, I may appeal to the modern German divines themselves *. They have published

* Bretschneider has published a pamphlet on this subject, called *Ueber die Unkirchlichkeit dieser Zeit*, (Gotha, 1822.)

a very large number of treatises, containing loud complaints of the total indifference existing towards

(which I have already mentioned), in which he says, that *so many have been published*, that he doubts if any thing new can be said. Some of his statements are very strong on the subject. He thinks that the indifference began after the seven years' war, (p. 2.) and I have little doubt myself, that in considering the religious state of Germany more at length than I have been able to do, the distracted state of the country during so large part of the two last centuries, must be taken into the account, as very unfavourable to the cause. But (p. 3.) he states that this indifference is spread among all classes, that (p. 4.) the Bible used to be found in every house—that very many made it a law to read a chapter every day, or at least every Sunday; that it must have been a very poor family, where a Bible was not a part of the marriage portion, but that now, very many do not possess one, or let it lie neglected in a corner—that (p. 5.) now hardly one-fifth of the inhabitants of towns receive the Sacrament, or confess—that few attend the churches, which are now too large, though fifty years ago they were too small—that few honour Sunday, but that many make it a day for private business, or for work; that (p. 9.) there are now few students in theology, compared with those in law or medicine; and that if things go on thus, there will shortly not be persons to supply the various ecclesiastical offices. He tries to prove, that the new fancies of the Rationalists had *not* produced this indifference, for he asks (p. 47.) whether citizens and merchants ever read learned disquisitions; but here Tittman, (p. 330.) directly contradicts him, and bears positive testimony, that there were *popular* books in plenty, exhibiting these new notions; and that the critical journals spread a knowledge of them also—especially the Allgem. Deutsch. Bibliothek. He positively testifies also, that the consequence was

all religious considerations. It is very remarkable, that in many instances, these complaints come from

distrust and suspicion of the doctrines of Christianity, among all classes; and an entire indifference to religion. Preaching had fallen into entire contempt, partly from the dreadfully low rate at which the preachers were paid, whence they were looked on with contempt, and could not of course be persons of education. Bretschneider is very loud also on this subject—and complains bitterly of the endeavours to deprive the clergy of all their rights, and impose duties not their own, upon them. This has been confirmed [to me by private information, with respect to the clergy of the north of Germany, where they were compelled often to add to their scanty income by farming in a small way*, and where they constantly associated with the farmers. But to return to Bretschneider; he confesses (p. 49, and following,) that some preached on the Rationalist doctrines, but only contends that all did not do so; and Tittman tells us, that some of the more orthodox preachers, very injudiciously in his opinion, attacked these new notions from the pulpit. Within sixty years, Bretschneider says, (p. 50.) the sermons have changed very much; and in contents, tone, and form, have followed the spirit of the age. They seem to have done so with a witness, from what he says in p. 49. for it thence appears, that many instead of preaching on the doctrines of Christianity, betook themselves to the more

* In Hanover, Hodgkin, if he is to be depended on, says, that near the Elbe, where the glebe is extensive and the land rich, the parish priests have *perhaps* 2500 thaler, equal to 416*l.* or rather 375*l.*; but in *general* from 300 to 1000, i. e. from 45*l.* to 150*l.* The clergy in the towns and superintendents have from 1200 to 1500, i. e. from 180*l.* to 225*l.* The abbot of Loccum has 6000 or 900*l.* The clergy of the towns are paid out of the town funds, those of the country out of land formerly church property and now used for this purpose. Their principal emolument consists in glebe, which the people are obliged to cultivate, but it is usually let. Vol. I. p. 407. Though the tradesmen and farmers are poor, they seem to have so (as) much wealth as the clergy. P. 408.

the very persons who have been formost in producing the mischief. They who have been most eager

useful subjects of politics and agriculture *, &c. But all this alteration in preaching was the effect, he says, not the cause of the disinclination to the church ; for when the preachers found that the old doctrines would not attract the people, they betook themselves to the new.

I subjoin some books on the subject of the lately-prevailing indifference. Hoffman Ein wort über die herrschende Irreligiosität. Berlin, 1804. Schleiermacher Ueber die Religion, Reden, &c. 2d ed. Berlin, 1806. and Zwei unworgreiflichen Gutachten in Sachen des Protest. Kirchenwesens. Berlin, 1804. Boll Von dem Verfall und der Wiederherstellung der Religiosität (2 vols. Neustrelitz, 1809 †.) Ueber das religiöse und Sittliche Verderben unsers Zeitalters, von. J. M. R. Biberach, 1805. Flugge Hist-krit. Darstellung des Einflusses der Kantischen Philos. vol. I. p. 45, and following. Fritzsch 'Ist die Predigt, oder sind die Prediger selbst die Ursachen der jetzigen Vernachlässigung des Gottendienstes, oder wess ist sonst die Schuld.' Magdeburg, 1816.

* It is to this, I suppose, which Schelling alludes in his Akademische Vorlesungen (though he rather speaks of what *must* be, than what *is* the consequence of these new doctrines) when he says, 'the preachers must be at various times, farmers, physicians, and every thing else, and not only recommend cow-pock from the pulpit, but teach their flocks how to choose the best kind of potatoes.'

† I have seen an extract in Hohenegger, from this work, which seems too rich in absurdity, even for a Rationalist. The good priest must surely misrepresent Boll, when he makes him say, after speaking of the eternal duration of punishments, that if Christianity should be got rid of, *which seems likely*, men must labour not to let such absurd ideas get into the new religion which will be established ; and that this would be no evil for real religion, and the ideas necessary to it, but rather an advantage, as these must gain by the fall of false religion, and a true one would be built on the ruins of superstition !

in rejecting all that is positive in religion, are surprised that men have become careless as to the negative part which they have left. There is also another fact which appears to indicate this indifference in no inconsiderable degree *, namely, the sin-

* I have been much attacked for this declaration, but can see no reason to alter it. I have stated my views more fully on the point in my letter to the Bishop of London, and must refer my reader to that work. I will only say here, that my objection is not to an union, if it can be brought about without sacrifice of conscience, but to the mode of union generally adopted and spoken of in the text, and that I refer to that mode of union as a proof of the existence of an indifference to particular opinions, or in the happy words of Weisman (II. p. 793.) of the '*licentia generalis parum æstimandi differentiam dogmatum quorumvis.*' Had either party really thought *any* doctrines matters of consequence, they would surely have dreaded the effect of such an union on the laity, who could not but conclude, when they saw men, who differed so widely *, and were sincere in that difference, yet uniting to form one common church, that doctrines were altogether mere speculative matters, and of no consequence in the formation of a Christian temper and disposition, or a Christian state of knowledge. The mischief of such a belief will far outweigh any good, which can arise from either the prevention or the cure of schism, desirable as such an end must be. But that end can, I think, be properly promoted only by the renunciation of error, except in minor matters, and not by throwing every positive doctrine into the shade, till there can at last be no reason, why heretics,

* '*Lutheranis, in multis utique articulis gravissimis Systemati Calviniano contrariis,*' says the moderate Weisman II. p. 781, in speaking of an attempt at union.

gular mode of union which has lately taken place, in many parts of Germany, between the Calvinistic and

Jews, and infidels should not alike range themselves under the banners of a new and generalized religion. The inculcation of a different opinion is, I think, a strong objection to the work of Dr. Hey, a name, however, which cannot be mentioned without respect, as long as the most extensive learning, and the most candid and Christian spirit can command it.

I think they, who turn to any of the late writers, will be convinced that my theory does them no injustice. When, indeed, I find Wegscheider saying, (p. 431.) that on the subject of *absolute decrees*, one party has just as good ground in Scripture as the other, though one of course is necessarily false—and presently after giving it as his own opinion, that both are so—when I find him, though a Lutheran, asserting (p. 509—11.) that Luther's idea as to the communion was false, and (p. 517.) lowering that sacrament not only below the notions of his own, but below those of the reformed churches, making it only a rite for keeping up a memory of Christ, and a remembrance of his doctrine and death, and for confirming men in their resolution to lead a good life, and even die for the truth—and when I know—what a very slight attention to the various works of the party will show—that these are very general opinions—I cannot doubt as to his indifference to the belief of his own church—I cannot feel that I have done injustice to them in citing this union in confirmation of my statement. That this union, however, may eventually produce great good, and make it easier for the governments to introduce a mild but firm system of discipline and order, I am not at all disposed to question. On the many projects for union in former times, and their failure, see Weisman's very interesting chapter, (vol. ii. p. 780, § 31.)

Lutheran denominations. However desirable unity may be (and, assuredly, it is one of the first blessings which a church can enjoy) it is too dearly bought, if bought at the expence of any essential principle of faith. Now in the case mentioned, no article of belief indeed was sacrificed on either side, because the principle of union was, that there should be no discussion of points of faith. The union consists in most places merely in a community of churches and of ministers, and an indiscriminate reception of the sacraments at the hands of these ministers *. But

* From a book called 'an Autumn near the Rhine,' it appears that the method pursued is such as to amalgamate the two methods followed by the opposite parties. The Lutherans were accustomed, like the Catholics, to use a small wafer, whole; the Calvinists bread, which they broke. They now use in common a large Lutheran wafer, which is broken like the Calvinistic bread, p. 412. (ed. 1818.)

It is curious, however, that Wegscheider, though a Lutheran, recommends the 'use of common and esculent bread, which should be broken into bits, instead of the wafers which under a barbarous name came into common use in the western church, in the course of the eleventh century.'

I cannot but observe that the clever author of the 'Autumn near the Rhine' has formed the same conclusions as myself. 'The animosity of doctrinal differences,' he says, 'which thirty years ago denied to the reformed at Frankfort a place of worship in the town—*having now subsided into the most quiescent apathy*, this amalgamation of forms was all that remained to be done.'

when we remember how very essentially these two professions of faith vary, it must, I think, be allowed, that such an union can only have been effected by an entire indifference * on each side to their own peculiar tenets.

On the other hand, the doctrines of the naturalising party certainly produced very strong and serious disgust. Indeed, it was impossible to suppose, that the mischief which such doctrines must do, should not be deeply felt and deplored by all who were yet real Christians, who were preserved by stronger principles, and wider views of truth. But, however much inclined to rally in support of the good cause, the unhappy state of the German church, its total want of any centre of union, and of any (practically) definite system of doctrine, afforded these friends of religion no opportunity of union and combination of force; and each advocate of religious truth was consequently left to defend it in his own way. Now religion was suffering both in her objec-

* Wegscheider, instead of pursuing the line of argument adopted by Sack on this matter, says fairly that the two points on which the churches differed were the substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the doctrine of absolute decrees, and that *pertinacity in retaining these doctrines is absurd*. (Wegscheider p. 515.) It would have been only fair to me if Professor Sack had remembered this and similar declarations from German writers, who at least knew as much of their own feelings as he did, before he attacked me. See his letter in Mr. Pusey's work.

tive and subjective character, both as an external theory of faith, and a practical amender of the heart. On the one hand, almost every dogma had been either altered or destroyed; and on the other, the practical part of religion was nullified by the subtilty of philosophical reasoning. In a better constituted church then, the powers of theological erudition on the one hand, would have been expended in defending the orthodox system of doctrine, and on the other, an appeal would have been made to the affections of mankind, in favor of the guide of their lives, the friend of their youth, their manhood, and their age. But although some of the sounder theologians *, especially Storr, certainly maintained the

* Let me again bear my testimony to the high merits of Storr, whose *school* has been of the highest service in Germany, nor must I omit to mention the respectable names of Reinhard, Steudel, Lücke, and Tholuck. Meyer, Kelle, Himly of Strassburg, and many writers in the Magazine of Flatt and Süßkind, and the latter writer himself, have all opposed parts of the system *. The writer in the Archives, to whom I have before referred, (see Supplement) gives a long list of other names as opponents of the system, to some of whom I must demur. Thus he names *Bretschneider* who has attempted to destroy the au-

* It is so common to find Rationalist writers oppose one another even on points of importance, that one must not be hasty in ascribing orthodoxy to a writer merely because he is violent on particular occasions against anti-orthodox principles. Thus Gabler, who is at times quite as offensive as any of these writers, is furious (in the *Neuestes Theol. Journal*, vol. IX. p. 285.) against Paulus's method of explaining away some of the miracles.

old and orthodox principles, with great zeal, the greater number of those who oppose the Rationalists, appear to have considered some parts of the ancient system incapable of defence, and in others, to have dreaded the evils of protracted controversy. Dismayed by the actual evils which surrounded them, they desired to obviate them by any means, and as they were aware, that in Semler's school, the commencement of this change of theoretical views had arisen from a desire of assisting the cause, and establishing the superiority of practical religion, they judged, it seems, that the same road should be pursued in defending the ancient faith, which had been followed in attacking it. They, therefore, made their appeal to the feelings and the heart; and such an appeal in such a cause, can never be in vain. But then, the feelings of an individual in favor of neglected religion, may act with respect to others, or to himself. They may rouse him, as Borger has well said, like the Baptist to pour forth the fervor of his indignation on them who had forgotten their God, and attempt the restoration of his neglected worship; or they may impel him in despair

thenticity of St. John's gospel, and who is very frequently in his own writings any thing but orthodox.

I know not by what inadvertence I omitted in the first edition the highly respected name of *Knapp*, a man of Christian views, of extensive learning and real piety.

at the sight of all around him, to retire within his own bosom, and in the indulgence of mystic meditation to enjoy at least *within*, the religious excitement which he seeks in vain without. The latter was the course of many of the Germans. They resigned themselves to religious meditation, and to that fascinating dream of the mystics in all ages, the notion of an union with God *, and an immediate perception of the truths of religion †. In truth, the open denial of all value of the reason is the constant, and from the very construction of the human mind, the necessary consequence of the reason's asserting her authority out of her own sphere. History testifies to this great truth. The age which produced the scholastic philosophy, produced also one of the earlier schools of mystical theology. So when the cold and scientific school of Wolf had perhaps sown the first seeds of the rationalizing philosophy which sprung up afterwards, and the fruit was an attempt to tear away all religion by heartless reasonings, the heart and feelings were effectually roused, and the aversion from these proceedings shewed itself in an entire re-

* See Arnold's *Historia et Descriptio Theologiæ Mysticæ*. Frankf. 1702. Fenelon's *Explication des Maximes des Saints sur la vie interieure*. Paris, 1697. Walch's *Religios. Streitigk. ausser d. Evang. Kirche*. Vol. V. c. 6. Beck Comment, 663. Reinhard Dog. 536.

† See a note from Izscherer below.

signation of the whole being, to the dominion of the feelings and senses, in short, to absolute mysticism. This feeling was nourished in the less-informed class of society, by the constant circulation of enthusiastic tracts *, either original or translated: in the higher class, by the reigning systems of philosophy of the age †. Any general enquiry into those schemes of

* Many of these were translations from the trash circulated in this country, by the enthusiasts in and out of the church. Borger says, (*De Mysticismo*, p. 82.) with some wonder, that the society of Basle in 1814 published 34,000 copies of these tracts.

† I had resolved to give here a compressed sketch of the three systems of philosophy prevalent in Germany, as far as they regard religion, such as might have at least done somewhat less injustice to them than the very brief notice in the text, but after entering on it, I found it must extend to such a length as is not consistent with the limits of a note. I am, however, persuaded that they who will take the trouble of perusing Professor Borger's treatise *De Mysticismo*, or at least the chapters in *Madm. de Stael's* works on this subject, will be convinced that although it was assuredly not the design of the two first systems to promote *mysticism*, there were many elements in them which favoured it. If the reader wishes to see a short view of the systems of Fichte and Schelling he will find one given by Tholuck in Mr. Pusey's work, p. 166—170. and an excellent sketch of Kant's system in Schröckh VI. p. 114—149. I would take this opportunity of referring my readers to an able article in the *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1827, as containing matter which may lead them (if they will give it full attention) to a more just appreciation of the *metaphysics* of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling. The writer is angry,

philosophy would be a subject of far too difficult and extended a nature, but we may observe, that the two

indeed, at the charge of mysticism as applied to these writers, and he makes a curious confusion between the men and their works, and a reference to their personal character in defence against the charge of mysticism. This is singular in so able a writer. The facts, however, are these. No one who has attained even a very distant and humble apprehension of Kant or Fichte's systems will accuse either those systems or their authors of intentionally favouring mysticism. But of the *unintended* effects of their works on lesser and lower minds I cannot so speak; on the contrary, I believe I am quite borne out in saying that they did much to prepare the way for the later mysticism. Of Schelling, in whose defence the writer is equally animated, it is of course unnecessary to speak. May I venture to address one word of advice to the writer of the article in question? Why will not he as well as some other very able persons who admire German literature and desire to introduce it here, keep in mind what is the state of things in England? The English are not a thinking and speculative, but a practical people, and they are accustomed to look at things only in a practical point of view. This habit is carried into their literature, and he who wishes to gain their attention must not deal in abstractions, or he will write in vain. Things must be presented in a definite tangible form or the English capacity cannot receive them. It may be a very good or a very bad state of the intellect; on that point I say nothing; but I maintain that this is the state of English intellect, and this will sufficiently account for the neglect experienced by many valuable works of latter days. A very clever friend of mine said that Madame de Stael's metaphysics were "Kant and water," and the writerto whom I allude may be assured that he must

first systems so far at least prepared the way for mysticism, that they removed all objective arguments for religion, and substituted mere subjective ones. I mean not, that these two systems *intentionally* promoted mysticism. But the first of these systems; when in its enquiries as to the limits of human knowledge, it bounded all our knowledge to the sensible world, and denied to man all knowledge of the intellectual world, at least, did this : it denied almost all power to theoretic reason, and it built our knowledge of God, of our moral liberty, and of a future life, not on reason but wholly on a practical faith, founded on our moral constitution *. Even they who opposed the full extent of the principle would

put a great deal of water to his Kant before it will be tasteful to English palates. I earnestly hope he may be induced to consider this well-meant advice, for his extensive knowledge of the subject would then enable him to give English readers something like a notion of German metaphysics.

* ‘ The benefits conferred by the Kantian philosophy resulted more immediately from its negative, ultimately also from its positive, side ; from the former, not only by the destruction of the Wolfian demonstrative method, and the annihilation of the presumptuous shallowness of the popular philosophy, but in that by shewing the inadequacy of speculative reason in matters uncognizable by sense, it led many, who were not bound by the fetters of the new philosophy, to listen to the voice of nature, the revelation of God within them, and to seek as the direct result of consciousness, the truths which speculation was unable scien-

probably be led to grant, that it was in part true, and would thus be induced to take a more frequent

tifically to justify; a course, which it was expected by many * that Kant himself must have adopted. Nor is there any point at which the mind, which had resolved upon this step, could consistently rest, short of the acceptance of Christianity itself. On its positive side, the uncompromising strictness, with which it pronounced the full and complete realization of the perfect moral law to be the fundamental principle of our nature, re-awakened the moral consciousness from the slumber into which it had been cast by the enervating system of Eudaimonism; and though man wearied himself for a while in the endeavour to fulfil this law in his own strength, the more vivid the perception of its claims became, and the more that man was in consequence disquieted through the inadequacy of his own fulfilment of them, the more earnest must be the longing after a higher assistance, after a reconciliation with himself and with his God: the "Categorical Imperative," was, as the law of old, an initiating instructor which led him to Christ †. The fuller acquaintance with the moral nature of man, at which this philosophy arrived through a more persevering speculation upon the human mind, shewed also, especially in the acknowledgment of an in-dwelling disposition to evil, that a deeper philosophy was more in harmony with the depth of Christian truth ‡. Pusey, p. 164. I am not disposed to

* See Immanuel ein Buch für Juden und Heiden. Berlin, 1802.

† Twisten, S. 218.

‡ The first treatise in his "Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der reinen Vernunft," is on the "radical evil of Human Nature;" the second on the claims of the good principle to the dominion over man; the similar claims of the evil principle, the struggle between them, and what the New Testament teaches of man's fall into sin, and of the means by which he may free himself from the dominion of the evil principle.

and anxious inspection of that practical moral principle, said to be situated in their own nature—a step assuredly in nearer relation with the cultivation of the feelings, than with that of the reason. Others, who felt themselves obliged to give up many of their old grounds for certain principles, were unwilling to relinquish the firm belief with which they held the principles themselves, even independently on revelation. If no reasoning could prove the existence of a God ; that is, if reason has no right to transgress the limits of that sensible world, which according to this system bounds all our knowledge, and to introduce an intelligible author of this fair shew of earth and sky, the senses, the feelings, would do it in defiance of the reason, and the very reposing so important a truth on the mere authority of the senses, was another, if not necessary, at least, probable, step to mysticism. But although this system said that we could not know what God was, it still recognized a separation of God from the world and from man. Now the succeeding system went much farther, and contended that a Providence, or moral order of things, had no existence separate from our moral nature.

deny that some of these benefits might ensue, nor to assert (as I have before observed) that the direct tendency of the Kantian philosophy is to produce mysticism. I only speak of its possible and indirect tendency, and think my statement (or rather Borger's) borne out by the early part of Mr. Pusey's remarks.

Without judging of the ulterior tendency of these notions, or charging on their author that atheism, which he so strongly disclaimed, it is obvious, that such a doctrine, if received unsuspectingly, certainly leads to mysticism, because it leads to the foundation of all mysticism, the notion of an union with God, an union so strict, that his very existence is inconceivable to man, apart from man's moral nature. It may be said, however, and with truth, that these tendencies to mysticism were unintentional consequences of the systems I allude to ; but in the school which sprung up afterwards, that of Schelling, the very foundation of all the doctrines, was mystical. For while its author despised the theoretical reason equally with the founder of the first system, he concluded, that the inference made there, that we could have no knowledge of intelligible things, was quite false, and that we have a knowledge of intelligible things, by intuition. He taught that God was the only existing being, that he was *one* and *all* things, that whatever was out of God, was not, existed not—that we ourselves, as far as we really exist, exist in God, and that our individual and personal existence, is an apparent, and not a real one, for that our real existence consists in our identity with God. It is almost unjust to allude to such a system, in so passing and superficial a manner ; but I do so merely to show how entirely this philosophy, which was,

and is widely received; tended to the fostering of mysticism : and how much it is the same with the mysticism of former ages—with the Platonic mysticism, which inculcated doctrines, if not founded on the same ground, yet tending to the same effect (the necessity, namely, of an entire identification and union of the being with God)—and with the mysticism of subsequent times. Perhaps it differed in principle from all : but this at least was manifest, that assuming God as the only ground of all existences, the Absolute being in whom all other things exist, that is to say, assuming the actual identity of many things, which to us appear contrary to one another, this system could not appeal for proof of the possibility of the existence of this Absolute to any corporeal sense, or to the reason of mankind which could find nothing analogous to it in the visible world, nor in its own conclusions. It must necessarily rest upon the power of the imagination which could free itself from this empirical state of things, and rise to a state where that might be true, which could not be true according to the senses, and the reason. Here then imagination was the whole basis, as it was also with respect to the intuition of the Absolute, imagination too, carried to a higher pitch than even in poetry, which must never feign what the senses and reason do not confirm at least as possible. It was, therefore, to the cultivation and ex-

citement of the imagination, and consequently of the senses, that all attention was to be directed, and not to any extension of knowledge, nor direct emendation of the heart *. The public preachers were re-

* Tzschirner (in his continuation of Schröckh, vol. ix. p. 635.) after noticing that it was utterly impossible for the extreme of Rationalism to endure, has the following observations on this point. ‘ This has really happened within the last few years. Instead, however, of considering Religion as a common affair of the understanding and feelings, and satisfying themselves with a subordinate application of objects which occupy the fancy, men went to the other extreme under the misguidance of a philosophy, (which entirely threw down the use of the understanding on matters of Religion, and undertook to lead its followers to a contemplation of the Divinity,) and maintained that philosophy, and, therefore, religion (the highest thing in philosophy) had a common origin with poetry, disdained all examination and enquiry in the field of religion, and insisted on its being poetically handled. Religion, it was said, is a child of fancy, and whoever wishes to exhibit it, must exhibit it for the fancy, which alone can call up the infinite in intellectual contemplation, and find it in the finite. Therefore religion must be presented not in cold dogmas, but in symbolical facts, and, in order to produce a religious sense and feeling in men’s minds, there is need, not of direction and instruction, but of a worship rich in ceremonies, and ornament by the application of the fine arts ; and then in its sensual representations and symbolical proceedings, the observer would see the lofty and divine. This is the poetic mysticism which finds not a few followers in Germany at this moment (1810), favours the return to the positive, and in many of its followers produces a tendency to Catholicism, which is better calculated than simple Protestantism to nourish fancy and feeling.’

quired by some of the disciples of this philosophy, to address themselves only to this point, and they were vehement accusers of the frigid sobriety of the Protestant worship, which rejected all splendid pomp and ceremonial, and the aid of all the elegant arts which could affect the senses and thus excite the imagination *. It will hardly be believed, that some of this school seemed to regret on these grounds, the destruction of that heathen religion †, which was so entirely a religion of the senses, while the author of the system (if I do not misunderstand him) contended that the Esoteric religion of the Greeks in their mysteries, was, in fact, the Christian system, which only revealed openly, what the mysteries had taught in private ‡. But it need hardly be said, that Popery soon began to find favor in the eyes of those who held those opinions, because it addresses itself so strongly to the senses, and in that

* ‘Hoc unum postulabant,’ says Borger, p. 177. ‘ut phantasia et sensus commoverentur.’ See A. T. A. F. Lehmus Predigten, nebst einer abhändl. über die Predigt. (Nordling, 1806.) and Rosenmüller Beytr. zur Homiletik, nebst einer abhändl. von der beredtsamkeit (Leips. 1814).

† See Schiller Sammtl. Werke, tom. III. p. 405. Schelling himself speaks constantly of the religion of Greece with the highest enthusiasm.

‡ See Schelling Philosophie und Religion (Tübingen, 1804.) p. 75. and Wegscheider’s tract De Græcorum mysteriis religioni non obtrudendis, p. 13—15. (Göttingen, 1805.)

respect, at least, supplies the void of which these writers complained. Many, in consequence, openly deserted the Protestant Church*, many would have introduced into it the ceremonies and worship of the Romanists, and even they who did not go these lengths use the most extraordinary language as to the advantages, nay, the necessity of a splendid

* See Tzschirner's continuation of Schröckh's *Kirchengeschichte Seit der Reform.* vol. ix. p. 636. For an example of the great admiration of the Catholic form, see Göthe's *Life*, vol. ii. p. 178—188, in the original. Again in the Translation, I. p. 224, and following, Göthe complains of the void, the breaks, and the want of harmony of the Protestant worship, ascribes the existing indifference to it—and says that the rejection of so many sacraments has done evil in the same way. So p. 27. 'The dryness of our mode of worship, estranged many persons from the predominant Church.'—The revulsion produced by the violences of Rationalism in favour of Popery is confessed, however reluctantly, in the great organ of the Rational party, the *Allg. Kirchen-zeitung* for Thursday, Oct. 12, 1826, p. 1313.

In the years 1813 and 1814, more than 300 men of cultivated minds went over to the Catholic church. See a book called, 'Hat und behält der Mensch bei und nach einem Religionswechsel seine gesunde Vernunft?' (Berl. et Leips. 1816.) Stolberg seems to have been disgusted by the uncertain and wavering doctrines of Protestantism. See his *Letters in the Theol. Nachr.* (1801, August.) p. 249. and (1802, March.) p. 78. 86. Anti-Stolberg by Kunhard. (Leipsic, 1808.) See also Haller's 'Schreiben an seine familie' (Lucern. 1821.) and Tzschirner *Der übertritt des Hn. von Haller zur Katholische Kirche beleuchtet*, (Leips. 1821.)

form of worship*, and the trifling importance of any positive doctrine; and, in a wild opposition to the naturalizing doctrines, maintain, that religion is to be felt, and need not be understood. There were differences of opinion, however, among these persons, as to the degree in which the rites of the Roman Church should be introduced, while others adopted what must be called a kind of allegorical Popery. For they explain the philosophy of Schelling in words and phrases taken from the Romanist doctrines, and speak of the priests † and the sacrifices of the Christian religion, without at all meaning to receive these words in their strict and legitimate acceptation. I would not, however, be understood to say, that all who passed over to the Roman Church, passed over in consequence of their acceptance of the mystical doctrines. It is on record, that some sought in the bosom of a church, which in the midst of all its dreadful corruptions, at least possessed the form, and retained the leading doctrines of a true church, the peace which they sought in vain, amid the endless

* See, for example, the first vol. of Horst's *Mysteriosophie* (Frankf. 1817). See also Tzschirner *de sacris eccl. nostræ caute emendandis*, *Commentat.* III. p. 48. (1815.) reprinted in his *Memorabilien für das Studium d. Predigers*, vol. v. part I. 1816.

† See Marheineke's *Grundlegung Zur Homiletik*, p. 19. (Hamb. 1811.) and Rosenmüller *Beytr. zur Homil.* p. 43, to show how the Catholics made use of these declarations.

variations of the Protestant churches of Germany, and their gradual renunciation of every doctrine of Christianity*.

Such, then, have been the effects of the naturalizing doctrines in Germany; indifference on the one hand, and a violent re-action tending to mysticism on the other. Into their farther effects (except as matter of curiosity) we are the less concerned to enquire, as without any knowledge of what these proceedings have done, we can have no difficulty in judging what they are likely to do—no difficulty in rejecting every principle which they involve with disgust and detestation.

I have now terminated such a review of the state of Protestantism in Germany, during the prevalence of Rationalism, as the limits of this work, and my own imperfect knowledge will allow. Even from that imperfect sketch, however, many important lessons may be drawn. The greatest of all is as-

* It need hardly be said, that such proceedings as those which we have seen in Germany, afforded matter of great triumph to the Romanist party. The book which I have already noticed, Starck's *Theodul's Gastmahl*, will be enough to shew the way in which they took advantage of the Rationalist declarations and doctrines. See also a tract called '*Libertatis Evangelicæ Vindicia*' by J. C. G. Ackermann (Erlangen, 1826) where many of the Roman Catholic arguments are stated.

surely the conviction which it impresses so deeply, that *unassisted* reason never fails to mislead those who resign themselves to its guidance; that whatever form it assumes, under every form it is frail or fallacious; that whether it endeavours to elevate the being by the use of mere human and earthly means, or by connecting it with its Maker through the medium of the imagination and the sense, its efforts are equally impotent; that he who desires so to elevate himself, must have recourse to Scripture alone, and the moral improvement of the being which it directs, as the sure and only method of enlarging his intellect, and ameliorating his condition. But these are lessons for all; there are others applicable to peculiar pursuits and conditions. The student in divinity may learn from the errors which this sketch of the modern German theology presents, that if he assumes any arbitrary theory for the interpretation of Scripture, no extent, and no depth of learning will save him from falling into the wildest error. The philosopher may learn, that if he choose to form any theory of the Christian system, he must philosophize with the Bible in his hand, and verify every step by a recourse to Scripture. The man of science may learn too, that the principles which he applies in other cases, are inapplicable here—that there is nothing to discover in revelation; that the province of the human under-

standing with respect to Scripture, is, *when its truth is acknowledged*, to believe, and to obey it. But most of all, we gather from all that has passed in Germany, the positive necessity for requiring from the teachers of religion a positive declaration of adherence to a Confession of Faith. Such a Confession should be short, and should relate only to essentials, but no one should be allowed to become a minister without making such a declaration, nor to remain a minister, if he does not abide by it. Whatever may be said in theory as to the freedom of Protestantism, no individual church can, humanly speaking, exist long, where a contrary practice prevails. The church of England we see, expressly assumes the exercise of such an authority; the practice, at least, of almost every body of dissenters, is in favour of it also; and the terrible evils resulting in the German church from the want of it, are the strongest practical proof of the wisdom, and necessity of adopting it. There was a time, however, and at no great distance, when a strong disposition existed, not indeed, in the largest or most respectable, but in the most clamorous of the clergy of England, to avoid subscription to our Articles, or to evade its force. Many of their declarations have no doubt been overstrained, and tortured into a form, far different from their own; and in the controversies with the Romanists of the present day, these tortured expressions are

falsely and shamefully appealed to, as conveying the sense of the English clergy on this great question *. But it must be allowed, that as the declarations on this point stand in the writings of some of the divines to whom I allude, even before their adversaries have had recourse to disingenuous suppressions, there are principles, which every honest mind must disavow, principles which it must give the bitterest regret to every true son of the church of England, to find in the works of **any** one of her members. Deeply, indeed, is it to be lamented on this, and on other accounts, that the church is deprived of a right, pos-

* I have alluded here principally to the grossly unfair accusations of Dr. Milner in his 'End of Controversy.' I say grossly unfair, because I am persuaded that Dr. Milner was a man of too much talent, and too general knowledge, not to know perfectly that the opinions which he could cite from a very few writers of the English church, are *not* the opinions of that church. In fact, he has misrepresented both Balguy and others. But if he had not done so, could he believe, that so idle a style of arguing as the attributing to an adversary, opinions which he disclaims, can have more than a temporary success? I wonder that a man of character and honour, can descend to such arts, or take advantage of the church being deprived of her public voice, to fix on her opinions which, in his heart, he knows she condemns. He, however, is not alone in these discreditable practices, but is joined by allies from a very different quarter. The Unitarians and Catholics unite in attempting to force upon us on all points, the opinions of Hoadly, and Paley, and Blackburne, with others of the same stamp and die.

sessed by every other church, nay, by every body of dissenters from her, however small or insignificant, that, namely, of deliberating in her collective capacity, of speaking with her public voice, and putting the seal of her public condemnation, on principles so utterly disavowed by an overwhelming majority of her own members, in the age when they were put forth *, and so entirely at variance with every principle of her own. This cloud indeed has passed away from us ; common sense has shewn the utter hopelessness of a church existing without making a declaration of faith, and requiring her ministers to subscribe to it ; and common honesty and honour have pointed out the disgrace of countenancing subscription to that declaration in any but its literal, and obvious sense. Nay, it is quite certain, that the expression of other principles would, in this day, be greeted with such an expression of universal disgust, as is due to every form and degree of equivocation and evasion. Yet these principles were avowed by

* There were two different times when the *evasion* of the force of our articles was tried :—first, in the time of Dr. Clarke, who countenanced Arian subscription and was followed by other writers. All that is required on this subject will be found in Bishop Van Mildert's *Life of Waterland*, p. 75, and following, and in *Waterland's Case of Arian Subscription considered*. Works, vol. II. p. 281. The second was a remnant of the old leaven in the time of Blackburne, &c.

men estimable in the highest degree in other points, and who, on other points, would assuredly have regarded evasion or equivocation with contempt. Neither were they faithless to the Christian cause, according to their own views of it, but on the contrary, defended it with zeal and ability and earnestness. One cause of their error seems to have been what may well be a cause for error again in these days, or in days to come, either an ignorance, or an undervaluing of the nature, the constitution and requirements of a church, and more especially of one like the Church of England. It is the constant fault of mankind, when in the enjoyment of blessings, to forget or overlook the source whence they flow, and as the question of church government and constitution had not been brought into view, by any peculiar circumstances at the time to which we allude, its necessity faded from the mind, and loose indefinite views of the excellence of Christianity in general, were substituted. These divines forgot, that they were not ministers of any indefinite, but of a definite form of Christianity; that they had recorded their belief, that that was the true and apostolical form, and that consequently, they were bound by every tie, to support and defend the views of Christianity, which that form enforced and prescribed. The fair sounding words of liberty and of freedom from controul, exercised that undue sway, which they always

do exercise, when their meaning is not severely tried, and they who by their own acts had renounced that freedom, forgot their own act, and became its warmest advocates. It is much to be feared, that in this present day, while the effects are different, there is the same ignorance, and the same forgetfulness of the leading principle, and constitution of our church. When we observe how much there is of impatient submission to authority, how much desire there is in individuals to quit their own sphere, to suggest and pursue their own plans for the confirmation, or advancement of the Christian cause, to become the advocates of general Christianity, and to testify an indifference to forms of belief, and of worship, we cannot but believe, that in those individuals, there must be a strange ignorance of what is required of them by the church to which they belong. In a deep feeling of the evils caused by such proceedings, we cannot but earnestly beseech these who are about to become public teachers in our church, not to overlook this essential branch of a clerical education, but to study deeply her constitution, and to understand what is the real situation of the minister of an episcopal church, and what are his duties before they undertake them. True, indeed, it is, that the Christian spirit may exist, independently of all this. True is it, that at the farthest verge of the earth, and remote from every form of every church, the spirit of

Christian hope, love, and joy, may glow in the bosom of the Christian. But that neither alters those principles of human nature which, as far as we can judge, first induced the great Founder of Christianity to order the use of external forms * in his

* I need hardly say, that in writing expressly upon the subject of episcopacy, different, and far higher ground would have been taken. It is indeed with sincere regret that one so often finds such inadequate and low views * of our church government taken even by those who mean to be its defenders. The only correct ground is, that episcopacy is the originally appointed and *sole* way of transmitting the commission to teach mankind, and administer the Christian ordinances; a commission which is essential to the Christian ministry, and which to be valid, must proceed from the great Head of the church, through that channel in which his apostles, whom he authorized for the purpose, originally placed it. Earnestly, very earnestly indeed should it be recommended to those about to enter the ministry to study this subject fully; for the deep conviction of being entrusted with a divine commission, and not one which is the fruit of mere human views of expediency, is of all considerations, the one most calculated to excite a spirit of lively zeal in the discharge of professional duty, and an entire devotion to professional feelings, and studies. Among all the works which I could

* The author of the article on Bishops in the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, doubtless intends to plead the cause of episcopacy, but the Section marked I. 1. will show that he has not altogether a just idea of the real grounds on which it rests. The common run of English writers at present obviously agree in the account given of the matter by a German minister, who says that 'the true and genuine sense of Protestantism recognises no caste of Priests, *consecrates none*, and will have nothing but teachers of the Gospel, and administrators of the Sacraments, *rite vocati*.' Hufel Ueber das wesen und den beruf des Evang. Christl. Geistlichen I. p. 132. (Giessen. 1822.)

church, nor lessens their obligation. Their necessity and their expediency I need not, and I will not consider here ; but thus much cannot be denied, that he who has become the minister of a form, which professes to be apostolical, has both set to the solemn record of his belief, that that claim can be justified, and has assumed every obligation, which such a profession implies. Before he does so, he may, if he pleases, become the minister of another form, or the minister of Christianity under no form ; but when he has done so, he has declared that, in his belief, the one only true and effectual way of carrying on his Master's work on earth, is that way, on which he has entered, and that that form, to which he has declared his adherence, is the form approved by his Master himself. He is therefore become now the minister *of a church*, and *while he continues so*, must pursue the road which that church dictates.

mention as likely to be useful to a student, I hardly know one which takes so forcible yet so succinct a view of the subject, and which afterwards so earnestly presses on the younger clergy the awful nature of the duties they have undertaken, as a Charge delivered to the clergy of New York in 1815, by their admirable and invaluable bishop. In a subsequent charge in 1818, entitled, *The Corruptions of the Church of Rome contrasted with certain Protestant Errors*, Bishop Hobart has entered on the same subject in some parts as I have done here ; and I only wish that I were able to urge these topics with his force of argument and of language.

If continued research should lead him to doubt the truth of the doctrines which the church delivers, he must quit her bosom ; for while he remains in it, he must teach what the church commands in the sphere which she assigns. He may think that at some time, something is left in that church undone, which should be done, something done, which should be left undone—but he will know also that it belongs not to him to remedy the error, or supply the deficiency. He will know, that God, under whose especial guidance he believes the church to be, may indeed permit evil ; but that his good spirit will rectify what is wrong, and supply what is wanting *in the appointed way*, and *at the due season*. His one aim will therefore be **fully** to understand what the spirit of the church is, his one aim to fulfil it ; he will earnestly desire to unite with all his brethren, and not cause or foster separation ; he will yield a ready and cheerful obedience to the authority of the church, and not endeavour to escape from that submission which he owes to it.

CHAPTER VI.

IN conclusion, I must say a few words on the *present* state of things in the Protestant Churches of Germany, and must notice with great pleasure the improvements which have undoubtedly taken place in their condition within a very recent period *. It was, indeed, impossible, that a system which united such gross absurdities to such open denial of the truths most dear and precious to man, could last very long †. We have already seen that it tended to generate a mystical state of religious feeling, which, though infinitely preferable to that condition which gave rise to it, was objectionable in

* The Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung speaks of the *last ten years* as an improving period. (July 1827. p. 57. December 1827. p. 354.)

† Many of the Rationalists saw, on other grounds, that either the church must go, or their system must change. Tzschirner (in his continuation of Schröckh, vol. ix. p. 642, 1810.) says, that a church, where a great part of the most distinguished teachers and of the thinking laity have given up, not particular doctrines, but the whole principle of the system, cannot last. Either a full return of the Rationalists to the Biblical system, or a decided transition of this system to Rationalism must take place.

itself, and capable of gross perversion *. Latterly, however, a more healthy spirit of religion has grown up in Germany. The reign of that voluptuous mysticism which expended itself in the mere passive indulgence of the affections is passing away, and a true and genuine Christianity is, I trust, beginning to take root in Germany, which, although like the mystical system, it addresses itself to the affections and feelings, does not stop there, but seeks to confirm and establish the dominion of vital and practical religion, by an intimate knowledge of the system of the Gospel, and a bold and unhesitating assertion of the truths it proclaims.

That such a system has many difficulties to meet, many evils from injudicious and enthusiastic friends, and many fearful attacks from a large body of opponents, need hardly be said after the exhibition which has been made of the previous state of German Protestantism†. But still we may discern every where strong marks of improvement. In the first

* I must entreat the reader to peruse a tale called "The Betrothing," by Tieck, and the translator's preface, as containing a most valuable picture of the state of feeling to which I refer.

† One common method of annoyance is the attempt to confound all Christian feelings with the mysticism of a few years ago, and the calling it by the same name. See *Evang. Kirchen-Zeitung* for Dec. 1827. p. 353, and following.

place, I would mention the different and improved character of the Theological works which have latterly appeared, a fact well known to all readers of German divinity *. Nor is there a less favourable change in other quarters. The aspect of science and of historical enquiry is no longer hostile, but friendly to Christianity †. I believe, indeed, that there is now

* I allude to the writings of Neander, Twesten, Steudel, Theremin, Strauss, Harms, Hahn, Olshausen, Heubner, &c. &c.

† The following statement is given by Twesten. I use Mr. Pusey's translation :

“ To this must be added, what we have before mentioned, the more favourable direction which science has taken. Mere empiricism and materialism have vanished from the schools of philosophy; the religious ideas are indeed differently explained and interpreted, but they are acknowledged every where; the disposition has ceased to ascribe reality only to that which admits of demonstration; the understanding and the will are no longer accounted the only modes in which the activity of the mental powers can exert itself; the claims of the feeling, the peculiar organ of religion in man, remain no longer unregarded. On the other hand a different spirit is aroused in historical studies also. The time is past in which Christian antiquity furnished materials only for the exercise of critical acumen, with which there was no sympathy, from which the mind was too estranged to be able to obtain from it a pure historical picture; the mind has ceased to be susceptible only for what coincides with certain prevailing opinions; it has learnt the abstraction from self, necessary for the full reception of the impressions of history. Much has thus become intelligible to us, which hitherto was as a sealed book, and in the same proportion has it been brought nearer to us; we feel ourselves attracted by the character and the efforts of antiquity; we can transport ourselves into their feelings and modes of conception; we can derive pleasure and improvement from the expressions of their Christian sentiments. By these means has that pride been checked, through which our age deemed itself raised so far above every thing which preceded it; what our ancestors have transmitted to us as the fruit of their exertions, is no more rejected without further examination as valueless; but the duty of respecting, and of faithfully preserving it, is acknowledged, wherever it was not founded on transient circumstances of the time, but expressed the fundamental ideas of Christianity and Protestantism. At the same time, however, the investigations in Scriptural interpretation and in history have cleared away much, which hindered

scarce an university in Germany, which has not one or more professors of really Christian views. But one of the most direct, though, perhaps, at first sight, (especially to those who are not aware of the importance of Journals in Germany) not very cogent proofs of improvement, is the fact that the orthodox party are so far advanced in strength, that they have recently established more than one journal on their own principles. I would beg here to mention especially the *Evangelische Kirchen-zeitung*, established at Berlin, so lately as the summer of 1827; and conducted by Professor Hengstenberg, with the valuable assistance of Neander, of Tholuck, of Von Gerlach, as well as many other distinguished persons *; and the *Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie*,

* From this journal many particulars may be gained as to the progress of a better feeling in religion. Among other facts it mentions (Dec. 1827. p. 355.) that there is a Tract Society in Hamburg which in the year 1825 distributed 86,954 tracts, and these *not* enthusiastic, but written on sound orthodox principles, and printed under the express permission of the authorities. I mention the matter merely as a fact shewing the activity of the friends of religion, without however meaning to assert that all their tracts are free from enthusiasm. In the same volume, p. 397, is an account of the Berlin Tract Society, established in

the right understanding and free appropriation of these ideas; the essential has been separated from the non-essential and accidental, the indifferent and unimportant has been brought back to its true value; the genuine traits of Evangelical Christianity are become more clearly prominent, since that has been removed through which it was thought to help out, or to adorn, the portrait; so that there is nothing to deter any one from accepting it, in whom there is found an internal alliance with its spirit."

established last year at Tübingen, by the Divinity Professors of that University, under the direction of Steudel.

There is likewise in one respect a great improvement in the Philological labours of even the Rationalist divines. I cannot indeed say, that *they* are become Christians, but some of them are become, what they were not before, scholars. I have already noticed the ignorance, or neglect of every thing like real scholarship in the exegetical works of persons like Paulus, and of their absurd attempts to misinterpret the language of Scripture, because they did not like its doctrine. That school is certainly passing away, and its absurdities are perceived and exposed with no sparing hand by persons whose

1816, by royal authority; its usefulness has been recognized by the government; all its tracts are subject to the censure of the Synod of Berlin (of which Schleiermacher is a member); it makes a return every year to the proper authority; it has spread 1,085,470 copies of 46 tracts; its presidents have been, Hanstein, Marheineke, Nicolai. A furious attack was made on these tract societies in Röhr's *Prediger-Bibliothek*. vol. viii. part II. 1827, to which this article is a reply. I see in the No. for March, 1828, that the Synod of Elberfeld have actually deprived one Mohn, a pastor at Duisburg, of his office, for preaching a sermon, in which he said that the doctrines of the Atonement, of Original Sin, &c. were lies. I ought to add, that there is in this Journal every now and then a strange piece of cant, and that its correspondents in England know nothing of the proceedings or real spirit of our Church.

views of Christianity are perhaps as yet not much higher than those of the writers they attack. The difference between these two parties is simply this. The earlier writers abused the language, in order to get rid of the facts and doctrines which they disliked ; the more recent critics are both able and willing to expound whatever the Scriptures say, on the acknowledged rules of interpretation, though when they have discovered the sense of an Evangelist, some of them may pay little regard to his authority. This latter class seems to me to be no inconsiderable improvement on the former ; for in the one case, if a critic can be convinced from other sources that Christianity deserves his attentive consideration, he has no reserve of false and fallacious criticism to throw himself back upon, while in the other, it is vain to shew an ignorant half scholar that Christianity is a divine religion, because his ignorance of the real meaning of language, and of the just laws of criticism, will prevent him from knowing, or at least will save him from the necessity of confessing, that the doctrines which are attributed to this divine religion, appear on the face of its records *. In short, a race of good scholars among

* The late work of Fritzsche on St. Matthew's Gospel will well illustrate what I mean. I have already quoted his words against such critics as Paulus, and similar expressions of contempt occur in other parts of his work. See for example pp. 498,

the divines of Germany, will be an inestimable benefit, because they will prevent the Rationalists from

502. Yet I can see no mark through his work of any real acceptance of Christian doctrines. It is perfectly true, he allows, that the writer relates such and such miracles, or lays down such and such positions, but this is to be attributed to the notions of the age in which he lived. Fritzsche was, I believe, a pupil of Hermann, and is undoubtedly a very excellent scholar. It is well worth while to lay before my readers the opinion of De Wette on this important matter. 'Above every thing,' says he, 'our interpretation of Scripture must be put into a new and better condition, and go deeper. The weakness, dryness, and impiety of the heretofore so called historical interpretation cannot any longer satisfy us. This exegesis is not grammatical, for it often handles languages quite wrongly, and knows not their actual laws; nor is it historical, for it enquires not, and lives not in and with history, and has no historical contemplation of things; in fine, it deserves not the name of exegesis, for it is not an interpreter of what is holy, which it knows and understands not. We shall never get at the spirit of Christianity by a comparison of Jewish views, and passages from the rabbis, for no one has ever yet understood the living by means of the dead. And if it should multiply all the instruments of historical interpretation, and fix their relation to one another with yet greater acuteness, yet if its own spirit be not raised, and its look elevated to living contemplation, it will always remain in the outer court of the temple, and not become consecrated and holy.' *Reformations Almanach* (1 Jahrg, 1817.) p. 355, from a paper on the 'Fall of the Protestant Church in Germany and the means of its Restoration.' De Wette, as we have seen above, though he has given up his old opinions, is not yet an orthodox Christian, but is said to adhere to a system of human philosophy, with which he en-

establishing their doctrines by perversions of Scripture, and will thus close one door to folly and absurdity.

I have already spoken elsewhere of the altered tone of the Rationalists themselves. Some are become Christians ; some, I trust, though still in intellectual error, have feelingly perceived that their path was not the path of peace for themselves, or of godliness for their people ; some are ashamed of their absurdities ; some find that the assertion of their opinions does not obtain the same applause which it did a few years ago ; and finally, some find that the hand of power is against them *. On this

deavours to unite Christianity. I mention this merely to shew that he has no prejudices to lead him to a reprobation of the Rationalist system of exegesis.

* ‘ The clear-sighted perceive that the day of naked Rationalism is gone by ; that it is all over with their influence and credit, if they still adhere to it ; that a consciousness of the opposition will daily become stronger among the people and that the most disagreeable incongruity will arise between the new views of the preacher, and the old views of the people ; they cannot but see that the indifference shewn by many Governments on the point, as it is unnatural, cannot be lasting, but must give way to a recognition of the real claims of the church. They therefore think it advisable to concede as much as they can, without giving up themselves, their ‘ old man ’ with its lusts, desires and speculations. They take possession of the out-works of Christianity, in order

point I subjoin a remarkable passage from the work of one who is still, I believe, a professed Rationalist. It is Tzschirner who thus speaks in his *Protestantismus und Katholicismus*. 'The general tone in Protestant Germany has latterly beyond all doubt changed to the advantage of the Church. People are tired of the declamations against superstition, priestcraft, &c. and see that they have no object. The present writers speak of the church in a different way from those of the last twenty years; except Paalzow, whom no one reads, and who is never weary of fighting phantoms of his own creation, I know of no anti-church writer in Germany. In many who were alienated from it, a love of their church is re-kindled, and even they who are still indifferent, no longer seek honour by testifying their contempt for it. The anti-church spirit arose and spread itself gradually; gradually only can it disappear and change into a spirit of love *.'

It must be added, however, that unquestionably this state of things must be and is productive of one terrible evil among the Rationalists, viz. the most

to war with more effect against the interior. This Hermaphrodite genus is more dangerous than open Rationalism.' *Evang. Kirchen-Zeit.* for Aug. 1828. p. 532.

* *Protestantismus und Katholicismus*, p. 59, note. (4th edition, Leipsic, 1824).

odious hypocrisy. While their hostility to Revelation remains the same, they resort in a still higher degree than before to the use of Christian phraseology in order to present a decent front to the public*. I transcribe with pleasure the following just remarks on this matter from the German journal to which I have before alluded. "What a degree of self-deception to allow one's self so unworthy and dishonourable a proceeding, and to believe that the Apostles and our Lord proceeded in the same way! Yet this disorder constantly increases in our church. Dinter is put forth as the example of this proceeding, and the most decided enemies of evangelical Christianity allow themselves in it, and recommend it to their scholars. The experienced are not deceived; they observe this useless practice, and certainly cannot feel *more* respect for those who resort to it. Men speak of the Son of God, of the Atonement made by Christ, of Redemption through his blood, and of his reign over heaven and earth, but when they so speak, they mean something very different from what the Bible means by these expressions.

* Professor Hahn of Leipsic has lately endeavoured to bring the Rationalists to a sense of the disgrace they cast on themselves by remaining in a church, to the doctrines of which they are in fact positive enemies, and has called on them to give to truth the honour due to her, and to separate from the Christian Church. See *Ev. Kirchen-Zeit.* for Aug. 4, 1827. p. 74.

They even speak in the pulpit of the devil and his angels (see Tzschirner's Magazine, iii. 2.), and of his going about like a roaring lion, &c. &c. yet have not the least notion of adhering to the Scripture notion of the devil; in fact, they might, according to their view, as well speak of Ahrimanes as of the devil *."

If the reader wishes for any instances of the practices here mentioned, he is requested to look to the papers on *Dinter*, in the Number of the magazine just referred to. He will there find a sketch of the opinions of a person who gives himself out as orthodox, and talks loud against the Rationalists, who nevertheless thinks that the revelation in Scripture is inferior and subject to the revelation in reason, and more liable to be misunderstood by the people than the revelation in nature; and proclaims boldly that the Bible has no law to give to any *reasonable* man, which he must not give to himself; and that it contains nothing, which our own reason has not already said to us †! Or let the reader

* Evang. Kirchen-Zeitung for Jan. 1828. p. 36.

† Mr. Pusey says (p. 171.) that among theologians the only remaining adherents of any note to the *strict* rationalistic school are Wegscheider and Röhr. Dinter's school of *thought*, whatever may be his words, is however tolerably strict. It is indeed very remarkable that Schröckh (viii. 66,) in speaking of Tieftrunk, Schmidt, and Ammon (in his earlier days) says expressly 'They were Rationalists; i. e. they did not assume that a revelation

consider the following passages from the works of German writers. 'Within these few years Röhr' (the well known Rationalist alluded to in the last note, who, by the way, like many others, is a General-Superintendent in the Lutheran church,) 'has introduced by example and admonition a style of preaching called Biblical. These Bible sermons are nothing but an ingenious clothing of Rationalist opinions in biblical forms and words, and a somewhat altered Rationalist exegesis, by which first the neological explanation is given and then a misapplied Bible phrase is added as an epigrammatic point. Such sermons are in fact entirely adapted to deceive both the laity and the theologians. With respect to Dr. Röhr, many have been actually misled into a notion that he has taken up other opinions as to belief in the Bible, and that it is consequently unjust to judge him still by his "Letters on Rationalism," especially as he has himself in some degree recalled this juvenile work, and given reason to expect a new edition. How entirely are these well-disposed people deceived!' Again, 'Other views with respect to the contest against the Gospel

could contain any other general doctrines than those which the human reason is in a state to discover.' The self-assumed orthodox Dinter therefore would assuredly be a Rationalist in Schröckh's opinion.

and the old Protestant church no doubt are now entertained; there is especially a belief that the old faith is not so entirely destroyed, and a conviction that it is wise to conceal Rationalism under the veil of the old orthodoxy, but the designs of the party are still the same, and those designs are the entire destruction of all belief in Revelation, and the erection of the unlimited power of reason, even in matters of faith. Such are the sentiments of an excellent layman, De Valentini, in his late work, called 'Ueber den Verfall und Wiederaufbau der Protestantischen Kirche' (Dusseldorf, 1828). The picture is completed by an account of a sermon delivered by the Dr. Röhr so often referred to. He commenced it with a prayer taken from Rev. iii. 12. 'The Lamb that was slain,' &c. His text was (1 Cor. i. 23.) 'We preach Christ crucified,' &c. He speaks constantly of the immense benefits done by Christ to the world; he talks of the blood of Christ as fertilizing the seeds of good within us, and concludes with a prayer to God, ' (who has sent his Son into the world to be a Mediator between himself and us, and to suffer and die for us, so that through his wounds we might be healed) to plant his Spirit within us, that we may be worthy of his merits,' &c. &c. Yet this writer is a strict Rationalist, and when he wrote his 'Letters on Rationalism,' made bitter complaints of the prac-

tice of clothing peculiar notions in orthodox phraseology ! * All comment is unnecessary.

They who have looked over any of the later Rationalist works, will have observed the extreme anxiety displayed by these persons, that no restraint in the way of church discipline, may be imposed on the ministry, and the violent language which they use on the matter. The English reader will find sufficient indications of this feeling in Dr. Bretschneider's reply to my work. This is of course easily comprehended after the statement just made. It would not be pleasant to those who say one thing and mean another, to be obliged to declare their real principles, and submit to the just consequence of not holding the belief of the church whose bread they are eating, namely, rejection from the ministry of that church. I am bound in fairness to add, that there is a good deal of the same feeling in persons whose opinions are far nearer the truth. It will be found in Sack's letter, published by Mr. Pusey, when speaking of the voluntary return of the German church to a better mind, he deprecates what he calls any political restraint. Mr. Pusey, speaking of course the mind of the class of German divines with whom he was acquainted, presents us

* See p. 462. This account is taken from the *Ev. Kirchen-Zeitung* for Aug. 1828. p. 526.

with the same opinion, and it will be found in one form or other even in the *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung*. I confess my surprise and regret at such a feeling among men of right minds, after the experience of the last sixty or seventy years. Although a rule of faith should regard essentials only, I am sure that till such a rule is laid down, every church will be liable, *as the German Protestant churches now are* (notwithstanding Mr. Sack's declamation about their *noble* freedom, their internal formative principles, &c. &c.) to irreligion and indifference concealed by hypocrisy on the one hand, and to fanaticism on the other. I earnestly hope the true friends of religion in these churches will reconsider this matter, and aid their respective governments in advancing the good cause.

For, in conclusion, it is a matter of sincere rejoicing that some of the governments of Germany have already taken up the cause of real Christianity, and are determined to discountenance the Rationalist party, to appoint professors and clergy of true Christian principles *, and to restore, as far as they can,

* Schöne, a vehement Neologist, says in his Chronological tables, under the year 1822, 'Homines pietatis nomen et speciem præ se ferentes, multis in locis in gratiam principum atque in munera publica inferuntur et intruduntur.' In other words, some of the Governments began to show favour to the opponents of

a purer state of public religion. It may not be without interest for my readers to know how these governments speak on this important matter, and I will, therefore, lay before them the Ordonnance of the sovereign of one of the states of Germany, important, not from its size, but from containing the large university of Heidelberg. The following is an abstract of an Ordonnance of Louis Grand Duke of Baden, dated Karlsruhe, July 1, 1824.

This paper states the regret of the Grand Duke, as Bishop and Sovereign of the Evangelical Church, at finding that the preaching of the pure Gospel is neglected; that in the sermons and catechisings, several fundamental dogmas are *passed in silence*, or *questioned and controverted*, and that instead of the eternal word of God human opinions are taught. Many clergy put away entirely the principal dogmas of Christianity, and make morality its essence; others profess a Rationalism subversive of all belief in the revelation made by God through our

Rationalism. Every one has heard of the contest which the King of Prussia had with the University of Halle about Tholuck. Yet Dr. Bretschneider, in his attack on me, had the singular hardihood to say that no one in Germany knew any thing of this. The *soreness* shown in the above extract from Schöne, and in all the writings of the Rationalists, is a sufficient proof of the value of his assertion.

Lord, and thus shew their desire to get rid of all positive Christianity by disseminating such a system as is equally fatal to the Church, State, and individuals. The Grand Duke cannot, and will not, tolerate such a state of things any longer. He therefore orders that the ministry of the Home Department shall direct the Theological faculty at Heidelberg * to maintain and cause to be taught in their courses of Dogmatics, the Evangelical doctrine as found in the Bible and symbolical books, conformably to the act of union ; *to avoid with care in the courses of Exegetics all that can question or doubt the sacred and miraculous facts in the New Testament ;* and in the courses on Ecclesiastical History and the History of Dogmas, *not to lose sight of the respect due to the Evangelical Church and the articles of her belief.* The committee (of ministry) charged with this business will therefore order the deans in their visitations to inspect the sermons preached during the last year, to examine them well, and to

* The Grand Duke had good reason to give some charge about that faculty. In 1808 they gave the prize to a work called 'Doctrina Inspirationis' (printed in 1820) by G. F. N. Sonntag, in which all positive notions of revelation were got rid of, and the narrations in the New Testament as to the descent of the Holy Ghost on our Lord and his Apostles, were said to be the *oriental* way of expressing the notion which the writers had that Jesus and his Apostles possessed a knowledge of religion.

see that in the catechisings the truth is taught in its purity. It will commit the care of *the secondary schools* exclusively to persons not only of knowledge but of tried principles. The directors of these establishments are often to attend the catechisings, and see that they are proper to produce due impressions on the hearts of the children, and they are to introduce *works of a truly Christian character*. In the examination for orders, the Committee is to see that the candidates possess not only the necessary knowledge, but also Christian opinions and irreproachable manners—and to prevent them as much as possible from going to foreign Universities, or pursuing courses of Lectures likely to destroy the Christian faith instead of strengthening it by sound knowledge.—Finally, in the projected catechism it is never to lose sight of the true Evangelical doctrine, as set forth in the symbolical books, especially the Lutheran and Heidelberg Catechisms.

The King of Prussia, a true and steady friend to vital Christianity, has done every thing in his power to favour its progress. The strongest and most beneficial step which he has been enabled to take is the introduction of a general Liturgy by authority. There is a proclamation of his on this important subject so early as the year 1814. He experienced,

of course, many difficulties *, and some objections were, not without reason, made to the Liturgy pro-

* That the King's intentions were frustrated for the moment by the objections entertained to the liturgy proposed. I have understood that the king had laid his commands on the bishop of Potsdam (for there are two bishops nominated in Prussia, though I need not say that the constitution of the Lutheran church there is not episcopal, and that these bishops possess merely the name *) to draw up a liturgy, which, when completed, was so unsatisfactory to his majesty, no mean judge in these matters, that he entrusted the business to a layman, in an official situation about his own person. The liturgy so composed, was promulgated by the royal authority, but the substance of it was objected to, and I think with some reason, by the clergy; and the very right of the king to impose a liturgy questioned with a freedom which would astonish those who assert the slavery of the press in the Prussian dominions. Among the pamphlets, an anonymous one called, 'Ueber die Liturgische Recht Evangelischer Landesfürsten, ein Theologisches bedenken, von Pacificus Sincerus,' printed at Göttingen, attracted great attention at the time; I believe that the celebrated Schleiermacher was the author. There is a very interesting correspondence between Jablonski, Archbishop Sharp, and others, in the second volume of the Archbishop's Life, Appendix, pp. 153—262, relating to an attempt made in the years 1711, 1712, and 1713, to introduce the Anglican Liturgy and church government into Prussia under the auspices of the then king. It appears that there had been another attempt a few years before, which had failed through the failure of a letter sent

* On the existence and history of the two Bishops in the Lutheran Church, see a work already cited, called *Die Kirchenordnung der Evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands in ihrem ersten Jahrhundert.*

posed, but it has been modified so as to meet these objections, and I believe I have now authority for saying that its adoption is *universal*. Every friend to real Christianity must rejoice unfeignedly at the King's success, in the belief that, under God's blessing, this is one of the most valuable means for preserving a true faith in clergy and people. The constant and public recognition of those great doctrines of Christianity, without which it sinks into a mere cold system of morality, and loses all its renewing and strengthening efficacy on the heart, is of incalculable importance. While a church possesses a liturgy which does recognise those doctrines, she possesses at least one tower of strength against her adversaries ; and it is from an instinctive knowledge of that truth, that we find fanatics and liberals always loud and bitter against its introduction. What

by the king over to the then Archbishop of Canterbury, (see p. 237 *) and the immediate cause of the failure of this second scheme was the king's death in 1713, and that of Archbishop Sharp in 1714, though it may be doubted whether such a scheme was likely at that time to have succeeded. Jablonski complains bitterly of the want of a liturgy (p. 156.) and represents the state of religious knowledge as at a very low ebb.

* As this took place in 1705 or 1706 (see Sharp's Life, vol. i. p. 406.) it must have been Tennison. The king had gone so far as to have a translation of the English Liturgy into German made, which was to have been introduced into his chapel on Advent Sunday, 1706. Although this failed, he never allowed extempore prayer afterwards in his own chapel (ibid. p. 410.).

a lesson may we gather on this head from the revolting and vulgar fury of the Scotch covenanters against a liturgy, which in Evangelical piety and Christian fervour has never been surpassed. Let us look on the other hand to our Common Prayer Book as altered for the purpose of Unitarian worship, and see how it sinks from a warm and fervent expression of Christian devotion, to a poor lifeless form, which can give no hope, no strength, no comfort *.

I have already had occasion to speak of the Union between the two Protestant churches in Germany,

* To speak of the duty of so framing a liturgy as to exclude none from joining in it who choose to call themselves Christians, is to shew an utter forgetfulness of the sacred duty which we owe to those who are already sincere Christians, the duty, I mean, of preserving them in the faith by constantly recalling to their minds the great doctrines of Christianity, and shewing them the practical application of those doctrines to their wants and weakness. To sacrifice the discharge of this duty, to sacrifice the truth, in a word, to what we confess to be (in our belief) falsehood, may be perfectly consistent with the spurious liberality of the present day, but it is not consistent with the Christian duty of maintaining the truth, a duty which must be discharged before any other whatever. It is easy to talk of conciliation, but the true method of conciliation is the holding the truth with sincere Christian charity towards those who differ, not the complimenting it away. In this, as in all cases, it will be found at last, that honesty is the best policy, even if the best policy was the only matter of enquiry.

and have given my opinion as to the feelings of many of the clergy in so readily acceding to it. But whatever may have been their motives or feelings, the union is unquestionably a matter of the very greatest importance. It is no trifling matter that, by means of it, the Liturgy of which I have just spoken has been established through the Prussian dominions. For although many who receive it, undoubtedly do not receive it in its full and real sense, and therefore derive no benefit from it, yet, as we have every reason to hope that a better spirit is springing up in the clergy, we may be justified in believing that such a spirit will be cherished and confirmed by the use of a Scriptural Liturgy, and we cannot doubt that to the people it will be a source of delight and of blessing. In a short period too, I doubt not that a fitting Confession of Faith, will, under God's blessing, secure and strengthen the new church in Prussia, and that it will be accompanied or preceded by a proper system of church discipline *.

* The following lively picture of a church where discipline was not attended to, is given in a paper of Lord Burleigh's. (See British Critic, No. VIII.)

"Some say the service and prayer in the chancel; others in the body of the church. Some say the service in a seat made in the church; some in the pulpit, with their faces to the people.

It is deeply to be regretted that in many other instances, the Union, as I have stated above, has not been made on the principle either of a common Liturgy to be used by both parties, or of a common confession of faith, but merely on the principle of a community of churches and ministers, and an indiscriminate reception of the sacrament at their hands. I trust that by degrees the absurdity of this proceeding will be generally acknowledged and remedied.

“Some keep precisely the order of the Book, others intermeddle Psalms in Metre.

“Some say with a surplice, others without a surplice.
The table standing in the body of the church in some places; in others it standeth in the chancel. In some places the table standeth altar-wise distant from the wall or yard; in some places in the middle of the chancel, north and south. In some places the table is joined; in others it standeth upon tressels. In some the table hath a carpet, in others it hath none.

“Some with surplice and cap, some with surplice alone; others with none. Some with chalice, some with communion cup, others with a common cup. Some with unleavened bread, some with leavened.

“Some receive kneeling, others standing, others sitting.

“Some baptize in a font, some in a basin; some sign with the sign of the cross, others sign not, some ministers in a surplice, others without.

“Some with a square cap, some with a round cap; some with a button cap, some with a hat.

“Some in scholars clothes, some in others.”

It may be interesting to the reader to know where the Union has taken place, and I will give in conclusion such particulars as I am in possession of. Vater's Chronological Tables represent the union as having taken place in South Prussia as early as 1801, and state that in 1805 various communities at Cölln, Würzburg and Munich were united. In 1810 the King of Prussia gave an exhortation to a general union, which accordingly took effect in Nassau and some other places. There was a synod of clergy and professors for his dominions held at Breslau on October 1, 1822 (others say 1817), when the Union was resolved on. At Baden it took effect on October 28, 1821; at Mecklenburg-Schwerin in 1822, or 1823. In Saxe Cobourg the clergy are *to engage only to explain Scripture according to their conscience and conviction* *. In the Rheno-Bavarian church they 'resolved by their act of union, Section 3, to take the Holy Scriptures as the sole bond of theological instruction, thus doing away with all creeds †.' In Hesse-Cassel there was a synod at Hanau in May and June, 1818; and in the same year the Union was effected in Hanover. The royal confirmation was given to it in Bavaria in October 1818. Saxe-Weimar, and most of the other small states, as Hesse-

* See Archives du Christianisme, May, 1822.

† Sismondi's Progress of Religious Opinion, p. 72.

Darmstadt, Anhalt-Bernberg (in 1820), Waldeck (in 1821), and Pymont, have followed the example *.

In Baden the Union appears to have been better arranged than elsewhere. The Documents respecting it lay down the Confession of Augsburg, and the Catechism of Luther (? which) and that of Heidelberg as its symbolical books ; they add a series of questions explanatory of the Communion agreed on at a meeting of ministers, as they consider this the only point of doctrine on which there was an absolute difference between the churches (as existing in Baden) ; a system of instruction for children, the manner of public worship, and the order of singing, praying, and preaching are laid down ; the compilation of a common hymn-book is ordered ; the fasts and festivals recognized by the United church are announced ; the time of baptism is fixed (within six weeks of the birth) ; baptism in private houses is forbidden, and only an ordained minister is to baptize, except in extreme cases. Strict rules for the Communion are given ; the men and women are not, as before, to communicate on separate days, nor the single and married people, so as to separate families ; the Communion is not to be denied to the deaf and dumb, nor to people weak in understanding,

* See Translator's Preface to a book called *The Reformation in Catholic Germany*.

if they shew Christian feeling ; it can only be administered by an ordained minister ; the order of administration is pointed out ; the bread is to be white and cut into oblong pieces ; the words at giving the bread are, ‘ Christ says, Take eat, this is my body, which is given for you, Do this in remembrance of me ;’ at giving the cup, ‘ Christ says, Take and drink, this is the cup, the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.’ Rules are afterwards laid down for confirmation, marriages, and funerals. Subsequently it is announced that a Liturgy or Agenda will be given in two years (i. e. in 1823), containing forms of prayer for all occasions, which the clergy are required to use.

As to church government, the United Church recognizes the right of the Sovereign to take cognizance of all proceedings, ordinances, &c. and to take order for carrying them into effect, or to forbid them if inconsistent with the public good.

Special synods embrace all the parishes of a circle or diocese, and consist of all the ministers of this circle (who appear partly in their own character, and partly as members or presidents of the council of church elders), and of a deputation of temporal members, equal in number to half of the ministers. They meet every third year under the presidency of

the dean of the diocese, and a royal commissioner is to be present. Besides this diocesan synod, a synod of ministers is to be held every three years, to consider of the education and improvement of their own body; and a school-meeting at the same intervals, to consider of public education. The dean is to preside in each, and a royal commissioner is to attend. Then there is to be a general synod, consisting of a clergyman from every two dioceses, a layman from every four, two members of the Evangelical ministerial church commission, a member of the theological faculty at Heidelberg, named by the Grand Duke, and a royal commissioner as president. This synod has cognizance of church discipline and order, of doctrine and rites, of the lives of the clergy and all that concerns the good of the church.

Visitations are to be held every two years by the dean or other officer, and he is to enquire into the religious and moral state of the community, their funds and discipline.

The council of church elders, including the minister and the accountant, is to consist of not less than three, nor more than ten persons. The two mentioned are constant members, and the minister is president. The others are chosen by the community. It is their duty to look to the morals and

manners of the community, especially of the young and single persons, and to warn all against swearing, intemperance, &c., to see that proper reverence is paid to Sundays and festivals, to take charge of the fabric of the church, &c., and of the support of the poor, sick, and old.

There are subsequently minute directions as to the method of choosing members of the three councils or synods, and as to the management of the church property *.

Such is the present state of Protestantism in Germany. It is clear that no small degree of disgust at the past follies of the Rationalists prevails; that the cold and comfortless nature of their system has been perceived; that a party of truly Christian views has arisen, and that there is a disposition alike in the people, the better part of the divines, and the philosophers to return to that revealed religion, which alone can give them comfort and peace. It is equally clear that some at least of the Governments perceive the dangerous tendency of the Rationalist opinions, and that they are sincerely desirous of promoting a better state of religious feeling.

* These particulars are taken from a book called *Evangelische Kirchen-Vereinigung im Grossherzogthum Baden nach ihren haupturkunden und Dokumenten*. Heidelberg. 1821.

“ The ground then is prepared ; it remains only that the seed of a living faith be cast into it. The fields are ready to harvest ; only may the Lord of the harvest send his labourers ! And why should we not put our trust in him, who has planted, propagated, preserved Christianity among circumstances so much more difficult ! He, whose assistance our Church has experienced in so many a severe contest, will not desert it even now, whether he presently send one, who in the spirit and power of a Luther shall quickly turn the hearts, and bring back the minds of the fathers to the children, or whether it lie in his purpose that the crisis shall slowly unfold itself, and the religious life should gradually recover a sound and healthy state. Many appearances of the times point to a deeper, more universal, awakening of belief. If this be derived from the right source, then in a short time the undecided will become determined ; the wavering, firm ; the cold, warm ; the lukewarm be borne along ; and those foreign intermixtures be separated, which here and there create a suspicion of the good cause even in the minds of the well-disposed, and give to the adversaries a plausible ground of depreciating or of opposing it *.”

* Twisten, as translated by Mr. Pusey, p. 186.

SUPPLEMENT.



SUPPLEMENT.

THE following remarks on the State of Protestantism in Germany, and the Causes which led to it are written by P. A. STAPFER. The first are extracted from a series of papers entitled "Réflexions suggérées par l'annonce du concours qui doit s'ouvrir à Montauban," and inserted in the Archives du Christianisme for 1824.—The second is taken, without alteration, from two Numbers of the same Journal for last year. That Journal is so little read, and the remarks are so valuable, that I do the English reader an acceptable service in reprinting them.

Réflexions suggérées par l'annonce du concours qui doit s'ouvrir à Montauban.

Dans la pénurie de livres protestans, d'origine française, appropriés à l'état actuel des études théologiques, à quelle littérature nous adresserons-nous, pour suppléer à ce qui nous manque ? A la Grande-Bretagne ? Sans doute, elle est riche en excellens ouvrages sur toutes les parties de la science du théologien et des fonctions du pasteur. Mais, outre que les plus importans sont presque tous écrits dans la langue du pays, et d'une acquisition ou difficile ou dispendieuse, ils sont adaptés à des circonstances, à des habitudes, à une tournure d'esprit, à des institutions, et à un caractère national qui empêchent qu'ils puissent s'appliquer complètement à nos relations et à nos besoins. Les Anglais eux-mêmes se sont vus forcés d'avoir recours à l'Allemagne, pour remplir des lacunes considérables dans leur bibliothèque théologique, et reconnaîtront de plus en plus toute l'étendue de cette obligation.

Les théologiens bataves donnent le même exemple, d'une manière plus remarquable encore. Il existe en hollandais des traductions d'une foule d'écrits, publiés en langue allemande, sur la théorie, l'enseignement, les sources de la religion, et sur l'interprétation des livres saints. C'est répondre d'avance aux personnes disposées à croire que les ouvrages des théologiens de l'Allemagne, rédigés en latin, suffiraient à tous les buts d'instruction qu'on peut se proposer en apprenant l'idiome de nos voisins. Depuis le milieu du siècle dernier, ils se sont servis de la langue nationale pour toutes les compositions importantes, pour celles surtout où ils se sont livrés à une pleine exposition, à des développemens profonds de leurs pensées et de leurs recherches, réservant le latin presque uniquement pour la rédaction d'abrégés concis et de programmes académiques où

l'on chercherait vainement les discussions variées, claires et suffisamment étendues qui sont nécessaires pour la complète intelligence et l'appréciation éclairée des assertions de l'auteur.

Qu'on ouvre, par exemple, au hasard, le *Traité de Théologie dogmatique* de M. *Wegscheider*, qu'un journal estimable a récemment recommandé à l'attention des personnes avides de connaître les travaux des théologiens allemands, et de se faire une idée de quelques-uns de leurs résultats. Plus on rencontrera de propositions piquantes par leur nouveauté ou remarquables par leur tendance, dont on désirerait examiner tous les appuis, et sur lesquelles il nous importerait d'obtenir des éclaircissemens ultérieurs, et plus on se verra exclusivement renvoyé à des sources où le lecteur versé dans la langue allemande pourra seul aller puiser. Il y a plus ; depuis que l'usage d'écrire en latin est tombé en désuétude, il est rare qu'il n'échappe au plus savant auteur des germanismes, surtout dans les matières qui ont été l'objet de controverses provoquées par les nouveaux systèmes de philosophie. Les théologiens sortis de l'école de l'élégant Ernesti, quoique leur style soit généralement assez pur (Morus, Tittman, Doederlein, Ammon, etc.) ne sont point exempts de ce défaut. Quelques livres, d'ailleurs excellens, comme les *Theologumena* de M. Daub, sont inintelligibles sans le secours de l'allemand. Alors même que les locutions, prises isolément, sont latines, la couleur générale est germanique, et, sans la connaissance de l'idiome natif de l'auteur, on se verra, presque à chaque page, exposé au double dommage de ne pas le comprendre, et de perdre un temps précieux, même dans le cas où on parviendrait à saisir le sens par conjecture. Chez les jeunes élèves en théologie, cet inconvénient est accompagné d'un véritable danger.

Prenant en main les *Lineamenta* de Henke, l'*Abrégé* d'Eckermann, les *Institutions* de Wegscheider, ils verront tous les dogmes distinctifs du christianisme traités d'enveloppes symboliques de vérités rationnelles, ou envisagés comme des doctrines transitoires, n'ayant eu qu'un but d'introduction, soit dans le plan de Dieu qui aurait, pour faciliter l'adoption de la vérité, permis son alliage avec des préjugés nationaux ou des images empruntées aux institutions locales et au langage de l'Orient, soit dans l'intention même des premiers prédicateurs de la foi qui auraient considéré cette association comme favorable ou nécessaire à l'aplanissement des principaux obstacles opposés au succès de leur entreprise. Ils verront ces anciennes erreurs de Socin présentées comme le résultat d'une étude plus approfondie de l'antiquité et de l'idiome employé par les écrivains sacrés, comme le fruit des progrès des connaissances historiques, fécondées par une saine psychologie, et par l'examen comparé des besoins et de la culture intellectuelle de l'homme, aux différentes époques de son éducation morale, comme le résumé de recherches aussi consciencieuses qu'étendues, faites par l'élite des théologiens, sous les yeux d'un public éclairé, accueillies par les juges compétens, et appliquées, depuis près d'un demi-siècle, à toutes les parties de l'enseignement religieux. Le lecteur voudra naturellement vérifier les titres de tant d'éloges prodigués à ces travaux : malheureusement les nombreux ouvrages où ils sont déposés, et qu'il trouvera cités, quelquefois avec une profusion stérile, à la suite de chaque paragraphe, seront, à peu d'exceptions près, inaccessibles pour lui. S'il est jeune, confiant, dépourvu d'une instruction solide, il se laissera éblouir, par l'éclat et la

multitude des autorités, par l'étalage d'une érudition plus facile qu'il ne pense, par l'assurance du ton, la spécieuse finesse des aperçus, l'élévation apparente des vues et des sentimens.

Ne concevant pas comment un homme instruit, un professeur estimé, un écrivain qui paraît peser toutes les opinions avec autant de calme que de sagacité, pourrait offrir à ses lecteurs, comme résultat incontestable de discussions suffisamment et contradictoirement prolongées, de pures conjectures plus ou moins ingénieuses, des combinaisons fantastiques, des suppositions non moins imaginaires que hardies, et laborieusement étayées, il sera loin de soupçonner que les citations de l'auteur indiquent fréquemment un ouvrage où toutes ses théories ont été d'avance complètement réfutées. Etranger au manège des partis et à la charlatanerie doctorale, il ne se doutera pas de la quantité, du poids, du mérite des adversaires de l'hypothèse, objet de la prédilection de l'auteur, passés sous silence ou traités avec dédain par lui ; disposé à croire que tous les bons esprits, tous les écrivains distingués l'ont adoptée, le jeune étudiant ignorera qu'elle est, sinon déjà abandonnée par tous, au moins repoussée par un grand nombre de théologiens du premier rang, et qu'elle a été victorieusement combattue dans plus d'un écrit.

Ainsi, quand il trouvera, dans la Dogmatique de M. *Wegscheider* qu'on l'a engagé à lire, la naissance surnaturelle de Jésus-Christ reléguée parmi les accessoires mythologiques dont la tradition a environné le berceau du Sauveur ; quand il verra généralement tout ce qu'il y a de miraculeux dans l'histoire biblique, ramenée à la mesure d'événemens ordinaires, mal jugés par les témoins, mais aujourd'hui susceptibles d'une plus saine appréciation, il risquera de prendre cette manière d'expliquer ou de dénaturer les récits de nos écrivains sacrés pour celle qui domine dans l'enseignement académique de l'Allemagne protestante ; car, réduit à former son opinion du crédit dont elle peut jouir, sur un abrégé qui étrangle toute exposition de preuves, où prendra-t-il une idée plus conforme à la réalité ? Qui lui apprendra que cette manière, mise à la mode par l'école de Heyne, accréditée par le savoir et le talent d'Eichhorn et de Paulus, favorisée par les conclusions qu'on se croyait forcé de déduire d'une partie des théories de Kant, a été, à toutes les époques de son invasion et de son influence, l'objet de la réprobation de l'immense majorité des amis de la religion, et celui d'une discussion lumineuse dans laquelle elle a été considérée sous tous ses aspects ; et ses principes, tant historiques et philologiques que métaphysiques et spéculatifs, ont été soumis à un examen dont elle ne peut se relever ? Tandis que l'illustre école de Storr suivait et détruisait pas à pas tous les sophismes, toutes les fictions téméraires, toutes les combinaisons gratuites qui rendaient le système du jour inadmissible en bonne exégèse, des penseurs profonds réconciliaient les esprits les plus prévenus avec l'idée d'une révélation miraculeuse, et montraient, sous un nouveau jour, son intime connexion avec les grandes fins de l'homme, et les notions les plus sublimes de la Divinité *.

* La théorie d'une intervention immédiate de Dieu dans les affaires humaines, telle que la demande ou la comporte l'état actuel des sciences philosophiques, a été récemment développée dans deux écrits qui respirent le bon esprit de l'école

Mais qu'arrivera-t-il ? Le jeune homme auquel *Wegscheider* sera tombé dans la main, s'estimera élevé à la hauteur des lumières du jour, lorsque, sur les pas de son guide, il se sera traîné sur des théories déjà rejetées par leurs anciens défenseurs parce qu'elles ont été trouvées faibles à l'épreuve de la raison, aidée du temps et du sentiment des besoins de l'homme, plus complètement reconnus et démontrés, soit par l'expérience, soit par l'investigation philosophique. Comme il a été trompé sur l'état de l'opinion des coryphées de la science à l'égard des miracles, il sera encore dans l'erreur lorsqu'il s'imaginera trouver dans l'ouvrage de son guide un tableau fidèle de leurs idées sur la valeur des dogmes de l'orthodoxie protestante. Il croira, par exemple, la doctrine de l'inspiration abandonnée ; il sera conduit à penser qu'à la voix éloquente d'Eichhorn les prophètes sont descendus de leur haut rang et sont devenus des patriotes zélés pour la restauration des mœurs et des institutions théocratiques, des enthousiastes pleins de verve poétique et de dévouement à l'ordre sacerdotal, que dis-je ? des orateurs du parti de l'opposition à la cour des rois d'Israël ou des défenseurs des intérêts nationaux contre les amis de l'étranger. Il ne doutera pas que les doctrines du péché originel, du sacrifice expiatoire du Rédempteur, des opérations de la Grâce, de la divinité de Jésus-Christ, n'aient fui devant le double flambeau de la nouvelle exégèse et de la raison réintégrée, dans ses droits par tant d'habiles vengeurs de son autorité. Certes (et nous sommes loin d'exagérer), telle sera inévitablement l'idée que se formera des opinions régnantes parmi les savans d'Allemagne, le jeune homme qui ne les connaîtra que par la Dogmatique de *Wegscheider* et la traduction de l'ouvrage d'Eichhorn sur les auteurs de l'Ancien-Testament*.

de Storr et toute l'indépendance de haute spéculation métaphysique, déployée dans les ouvrages des hommes supérieurs qu'a produits le Wurtemberg en plus grand nombre que toute autre contrée de l'Europe, et qui se sont formés sous l'influence des méthodes sévères suivies à Tubingue ; nous ne rappellerons ici que les noms de *Bilfinger*, *Plouquet*, *Ætinger*, *Schelling* et *Hegel*. Les deux écrits que nous nous faisons un devoir de signaler, ne peuvent être trop tôt et trop attentivement pris en considération par les amis de la religion ; ils ont paru en langue allemande à Stuttgart, il y a deux ans, et sont intitulés : 1° *Révélation et théologie ; Essai philosophique de G. T. Bockshammer* (malheureusement enlevé, jeune encore, à la culture des sciences spéculatives auxquelles son premier écrit, *De la liberté de la volonté* (Stuttgart, 1821), promettait de lumineuses analyses et des aperçus neufs ;) 2° *La Religion et la Théologie dans leur essence et leur fondement*, par *C. G. Schmid*. Ce dernier ouvrage, dont le premier volume, imprimé en 1822, inspire un vif désir de voir paraître la suite, fait concourir et concorder pour la justification de la croyance en une révélation divine tous les résultats des plus hautes pensées de Kant, Jacobi et Schelling, en les rectifiant et les complétant les uns par les autres, et en s'appuyant des systèmes conciliateurs de Fries, Krug, Sigwart, Gerlach, Eschenmayer, etc.

* Il est tout simple qu'on ait souvent exprimé le désir de voir l'*Introduction d'Eichhorn aux livres de l'Ancien-Testament*, l'une des plus brillantes productions, non seulement de la littérature théologique, mais de la littérature allemande en général, naturalisée en France par une bonne traduction. C'est un livre

Cette idée n'en sera pas moins complètement fausse. Mais le redressement des erreurs où elle aurait fait tomber des personnes mal instruites, ne peut évidemment entrer dans le cadre de ces réflexions sur l'éminente utilité de la langue allemande pour un professeur universitaire de théologie protestante. Comme néanmoins on pourrait nous soupçonner d'affirmer plus que nous ne serions en état de justifier par les faits, et que la matière est en elle-même assez

écrit avec un grand talent, et plein de recherches souvent neuves, quelquefois fructueuses, toujours intéressantes et pleines d'aperçus ingénieux. Personne n'est plus disposé à rendre justice au mérite, au caractère et aux travaux de cet illustre écrivain que l'auteur de cet article, disciple lui-même et ami de M. Eichhorn. Mais il ne se croit pas dispensé du devoir d'énoncer, en peu de mots, son opinion sur le grand et bel ouvrage dont il s'agit : il l'exprime avec la certitude qu'elle est partagée par une grande partie du public allemand, et notamment par une foule des admirateurs du style et du savoir du célèbre professeur de Göttingue. Son introduction à l'Ancien-Testament est écrite dans le dessein de faire des principes de l'école de Heyne, si heureusement employés à éclaircir quelques parties de la mythologie grecque, et l'origine de beaucoup de traditions historiques de l'antiquité classique, une application, tantôt voilée, tantôt plus ouverte, à tous les phénomènes moraux et aux événements extraordinaires que présente la littérature hébraïque. Tout y est ramené aux proportions humaines, avec un art et un appareil d'érudition qui dérobent à l'attention du lecteur, même instruit, la faiblesse des bases et la nature purement conjecturale des éléments qui portent et forment la texture des parties principales de cette vaste composition. Essai, par exemple, est, selon Eichhorn, une anthologie cousue de pièces de toute origine et de toute valeur. La lecture de l'ouvrage d'Eichhorn n'a pas en Allemagne la centième partie des inconvénients qu'elle entraînerait ailleurs. On y a sous la main une multitude de traités dans lesquels ses hypothèses sont examinées, et les résultats de ses recherches tournés contre lui-même. L'orientaliste Jahn, Meyer, dans son *Herméneutique*, Kelle, dans des écrits de critique spéciale, les savans de l'école de Storr, dans une série de dissertations qui ornent les deux Recueils périodiques publiés par MM. Flatt, Suskind et Bengel, de 1792 à 1824, n'ont pas laissé une seule des assertions hasardées d'Eichhorn sans un impartial et solide examen. Dans ces derniers temps) l'ascendant d'Eichhorn n'ayant été vraiment prépondérant, ou sans un contrepoids suffisant, que durant l'intervalle de 1790 à 1807), et surtout depuis que Gesenius, qui domine aujourd'hui dans les lettres hébraïques, s'est attaché à montrer combien Eichhorn a été dupe de sa propre imagination, et s'est cru dispensé d'administrer des preuves des opinions, valables à la balance d'une solide critique, ses ouvrages sont lus sans préjudice pour la foi et avec fruit, parce qu'ils sont lus avec précaution et avec contrôle. Mais il en serait tout autrement en France. Sans le correctif des discussions qu'on lui a opposées dans son pays, et qu'il faudrait joindre à la traduction de son grand ouvrage, son influence sur les études des jeunes ministres ne pourrait être que fort problématique, et nous menacerait avec la coopération d'un ou deux livres de même tendance, de fausser leurs idées sur l'état de l'opinion dans l'Allemagne savante, et de nous plonger dans une crise de rationalisme, au moment où nos voisins en sortent par le double secours d'une philosophie éminemment religieuse, et d'une simplicité de cœur échappée aux séductions de l'orgueil et de la corruption du siècle.

importante pour qu'on ne nous sache pas mauvais gré d'en citer quelques-uns, nous croyons devoir les prendre dans des branches différentes de la littérature théologique, et les offrir aux amis du vrai christianisme, en guise de compensation pour les renseignemens qui ont été consignés ici, et qui les auront sûrement attristés.

Un grand nombre d'hommes du premier mérite (je ne nommerai que MM. *Krummacher*, un des écrivains les plus remarquables de l'Allemagne; *Lücke*, professeur à Bonn, savant interprète de saint Jean; le sénateur francfortois de *Meyer*; *Tholuck*, professeur à Berlin, auteur d'un ouvrage qui a jeté un nouveau jour sur l'ancienne histoire de la Religion des Perses; *Winer*, professeur à Leipzig, qui a éclairci plusieurs points difficiles de la littérature judaïque) ont, aux applaudissemens de la saine partie du public, non seulement témoigné une profonde douleur de la manière toute profane avec laquelle quelques commentateurs célèbres avaient donné l'exemple de traiter nos saints livres, mais ils ont eux-mêmes, dans des ouvrages consacrés à l'explication de plusieurs parties de l'Ecriture, montré avec quelle vénération, avec quel saint respect pour les sources de toute consolation il convenait de remplir les fonctions d'interprète biblique. *Tholuck*, en particulier, dans une spirituelle apologie de l'étude de l'Ancien-Testament *, a prouvé, par des argumens tirés d'une profonde connaissance de ce code, ainsi que de celle du génie des peuples de l'Orient, que Jésus-Christ est le centre, la clef, la solution des annales et des institutions hébraïques, qu'il s'y présente, qu'il y règne, qu'il les pénètre dans leurs détails comme dans l'ensemble de leur histoire.

Qu'il nous soit permis de faire remarquer un fait d'un véritable intérêt exégétique. On sait que les théologiens novateurs qui tâchent, parfois dans des vues louables, de débarrasser la partie théorique de l'enseignement religieux, le plus qu'ils peuvent, de tout ce qui est inaccessible à l'intelligence ordinaire de l'homme, ne cessent de représenter les locutions de l'Ecriture, dont la trop grande clarté les gêne, comme des figures orientales qui, prises dans leur sens intrinsèque ou intentionnel, et dépouillées de toute couleur locale, ne signifient autre chose que les vérités fondamentales de la morale et de la religion naturelles. Dans d'autres circonstances d'institutions, d'habitudes, de climat, les auteurs sacrés les auraient, disent-ils, exprimées dans les termes précis d'un langage moins figuré et plus philosophique. Si ce principe était aussi fondé dans la nature comparée des idiomes qu'il est spécieux au premier abord, les savans les plus versés dans les langues d'Asie et d'Europe devraient, par leurs études, être le plus disposés à faire l'application du principe en question à l'éclaircissement des expressions prétendues symboliques de l'Ecriture. Or, il arrive, au contraire, qu'on trouve au nombre de ses interprètes orthodoxes les plus grands orientalistes et les meilleurs hébraïsans des temps modernes, Coccejus, Vitringa, Alb. Schultens et toute son école, Michaëlis, sir William Jones, Storr (auteur de l'admirable ouvrage de l'analogie hébraïque, la principale acquisition dont la philologie hébraïque ait été

* Les vues développées dans cet écrit, imprimé à Berlin en 1821, coïncident d'une manière frappante avec celles d'un discours prononcé, dans la même année, à la séance anniversaire de la Société biblique de Paris.

enrichie depuis les travaux de Schultens), Dathe, Kocher, etc, etc. M. Eichhorn ne forme pas d'exception ; dans ses leçons et dans les parties de sa bibliothèque exégétique, où il a eu occasion d'expliquer le Nouveau-Testament, il avoue franchement la conformité des interprétations orthodoxes avec le texte, examiné au flambeau d'une saine philologie ; mais il ne faut pas oublier que, dans son point de vue, il considère les apôtres comme ayant mêlé leurs idées individuelles et leurs préventions nationales aux vérités fondamentales de l'Évangile.

Le retour des esprits à la soumission humble et respectueuse envers nos livres sacrés, se fait universellement sentir, et s'est manifesté par le changement le plus absolu dans le point de vue sous lequel plusieurs des défenseurs les plus habiles du rationalisme considèrent aujourd'hui l'Évangile. Nous citerons, comme preuve de ce changement, la déclaration du docteur G. P. C. Kaiser, professeur à Erlangen, auteur du tableau le plus savant et le plus vaste qui ait été tracé des religions de toutes les nations du globe et de leur connexité avec les phases de leur civilisation. Le titre seul de cet ouvrage † indique le but de l'écrivain. Voulant montrer comment le Fondateur du Christianisme peut avoir été naturellement, et sans autre secours que celui d'une belle âme et d'un génie supérieur, conduit aux idées fondamentales de sa doctrine, par celles de ses devanciers et par l'état moral de ses contemporains, il fait, avec une érudition et une sagacité admirées par un des plus judicieux apologistes de l'origine surnaturelle de l'Évangile ‡, ressortir toutes les pensées et toutes les circonstances qui ont pu servir d'échelons à l'être unique qui s'est placé si haut. L'enchaînement ainsi dans la série des sages et des bienfaiteurs de l'humanité, il l'enchaîne, avec tout l'éclat qui l'environne et dont il ne lui laisse que les rayons émanés de sa grandeur personnelle, dans l'histoire du développement progressif de la raison humaine. Voici maintenant la profession que M. Kaiser a faite naguère, en tête de sa *Morale biblique*, publiée en 1821 :

“ J'avoue volontiers que mes vues dogmatiques sont entièrement changées, et que, dans mes cours, je ne fais plus aucun usage de la première partie de ma Théologie biblique. La parole révélée dans la Bible est devenue mon seul et parfait appui (mot à mot : est devenue pour moi la chose unique et toute chose ;

* L'auteur de ces articles a eu l'intention de les faire servir de cadre à une revue sommaire de quelques-uns des ouvrages, publiés en Allemagne dans les derniers temps, qui méritent particulièrement l'attention des amis d'une théologie saine et solide. Ce dessein, qui est d'ailleurs si conforme au plan de ce journal, justifiera les fréquentes digressions bibliographiques qui rompent, peut-être trop souvent, le fil des réflexions directement liées à la circonstance qui les a fait naître ; ces digressions pourront être regardées comme un supplément aux notices précédemment insérées dans les Archives sur les productions les plus remarquables de la littérature théologique de l'Allemagne.

† *Théologie biblique, ou Essai d'appréciation historique et d'interprétation grammaticale des documens du Judaïsme et du Christianisme, considérés dans leurs rapports avec le développement des idées religieuses comparées et avec la religion universelle.* Erlangen, 1813 et 1814.

‡ G. J. Planck, p. 42 du 1^{er} vol. de son *Histoire de l'Introduction du Christianisme dans le monde.*

Eins und alles.) Quels que soient les moyens employés par la Providence pour exciter en moi plus vivement ce besoin, de nature plus élevée, j'ai la conscience claire des raisons pour lesquelles j'ai cru, et qui m'ont, après vingt années de fonctions académiques et pastorales, attaché avec plus de fidélité à la révélation divine *."

Peu de rétractations ont été faites avec cette franchise ; mais il y en a beaucoup d'indirectement manifestées par un changement complet dans la tendance et dans les objets, tant de l'enseignement en chaire que des écrits imprimés sur des matières de théologie. Un illustre exemple pourrait nous être fourni par le Dr Ammon, long-temps sectateur et un des plus fermes soutiens du rationalisme. Mais nous devons ménager l'espace pour quelques mémorables déclarations relatives aux dogmes distinctifs de l'Eglise orthodoxe.

L'histoire moderne des opinions des théologiens allemands sur la naissance du Christianisme et sur les doctrines qui lui appartiennent essentiellement, offre un phénomène qui n'est pas moins instructif qu'il paraît bizarre au premier coup d'œil. Tandis que plusieurs d'entre les défenseurs de son origine surnaturelle croyaient servir leur cause en réduisant la révélation à une simple promulgation authentique de vérités accessibles aux facultés de l'homme, des philosophes qui repoussaient toute croyance en une intervention directe de la Divinité dans les affaires humaines, déduisaient de leurs systèmes rationnels, ou s'efforçaient au moins d'y incorporer, sous diverses formes, ces doctrines mystérieuses que les premiers cherchaient à écarter de l'enseignement religieux comme incompatibles avec la saine raison et comme nuisibles au crédit de l'Evangile. Souvent aussi l'exposition de dogmes placés hors de la sphère de l'intelligence humaine, conduisit à des conclusions entièrement opposées les savans interprètes qui en reconnaissaient l'énoncé clair et incontestable dans nos livres sacrés. Pendant que les uns croyaient y apercevoir la trace des altérations qu'avaient fait subir à la vérité primitive les premiers propagateurs du Christianisme, par l'association de leurs préjugés nationaux et de leurs idées individuelles à la pure et sublime religion de son Fondateur, d'autres, envisageant ces mystères, comme un supplément nécessaire aux lumières de la raison, abandonnée à ses propres ressources, y voyaient une des plus fortes preuves de l'origine surhumaine de l'Evangile.

Ce spectacle de défenseurs et d'adversaires s'appuyant chacun sur les mêmes argumens pour arriver à des propositions directement contraires, n'est-il pas singulièrement propre à nous inspirer une salutaire défiance dans l'autorité de ce que nous sommes disposés à appeler raison, c'est-à-dire, résultat d'une investigation impartiale et heureuse de la vérité, mais ce qui n'est presque toujours que l'effet de la direction donnée à l'esprit humain par un besoin ou un sentiment que des circonstances de position personnelle ou de civilisation particulière ont rendu prépondérant dans un individu et chez un peuple, à une époque donnée ? Ce même spectacle ne doit-il pas nous porter à une grande déférence pour des doctrines soumises à une vérification renouvelée par plusieurs générations, à l'examen d'hommes de tournure d'esprit et de culture morale diverses, à l'épreuve de tous les degrés d'intelligence, de doute, de force, de faiblesse et de souffrance que l'humanité est appelée à parcourir ?

* Préface, pag. iii. et iv.

Il est de la plus haute importance que le théologien ait une connaissance approfondie de l'état de sa science dans les différentes périodes de son développement, et des causes qui l'ont modifiée. Combien il est au-dessous de sa tâche le professeur dont l'instruction est renfermée dans les limites du siècle auquel il appartient et qui n'en a puisé les élémens que dans les livres accrédités par l'opinion régnante ! Chaque siècle a ses points de vue de prédilection ; il apprécie mieux ce qui satisfait des besoins provoqués ou plus vivement excités par les progrès de la société, et par une impulsion nouvelle donnée à ses travaux ; mais il perd souvent aussi de vue des besoins non moins réels, des intérêts non moins inséparables de la condition humaine, lorsqu'ils ne sont pas intimément liés à ceux qui absorbent pour le moment l'attention des classes lettrées. Il est donc évident que, dans chaque âge, l'exposition de la doctrine chrétienne risque d'être faussée par une direction trop exclusive donnée aux esprits, et par la domination de certains intérêts qui mettent en oubli ou éloignent de nos regards d'autres aspects de la nature humaine non moins dignes de la sollicitude de celui qui ne veut la priver d'aucun des secours ménagés à notre faiblesse par une religion si merveilleusement adaptée à la variété incalculable de nos besoins. De nos jours ; par exemple, les théologiens allemands, placés par leur genre de vie et leurs travaux dans une sphère presque purement contemplative, n'ayant habituellement en vue que les besoins de la raison spéculative, ont long-temps donné trop peu d'attention à ceux du cœur de l'homme et de sa nature dans sa totalité. Cette direction des discussions théologiques devint d'autant plus exclusive, que peu d'hommes du monde, et de professions pratiques, se sont occupés de matières religieuses en Allemagne ; vainement y chercherait-on les pareils des Addison, des Littleton, des Erskine, des Teignmouth, des Wilberforce.

* * * * *

J'ai déjà rappelé quelques-uns des faits qui me paraissent montrer dans une contrée qu'on peut appeler la terre classique de la théologie, et vers laquelle se tourneront de plus en plus tous ceux qui se livrent à l'étude sérieuse de cette science, une disposition au retour vers des points de doctrine long-temps dédaignés, presque relégués dans la classe des erreurs ou des nuances d'importance très-secondaire, et mis au rang des articles, pour ainsi dire, facultatifs, laissés au libre arbitre de l'opinion individuelle. On ne me saura pas mauvais gré, je pense, de citer encore quelques indices positifs d'une tendance qui ne peut que réjouir les amis de l'Evangile, en même temps qu'elle mérite l'attention et les égards des ministres chargés de l'enseigner, quel que soit d'ailleurs le système auquel leurs études et leurs réflexions les aient attachés.

Il est digne de remarque que, dans l'écrit même qui, concurremment avec l'influence des écoles de Semler, de Heyne et de Kant, a le plus contribué à changer la face de la théologie dogmatique en Allemagne, le retour au respect pour les doctrines distinctives de l'ancienne orthodoxie ait été annoncé, désiré, facilité par des observations pleines de justesse et de sagacité. Dans un essai intitulé : *l'Education du genre humain* (Berlin, 1780), l'éditeur des plus violentes diatribes qui aient jamais été dirigées contre le Christianisme, *G. E. Lessing*, après avoir établi que les deux codes de l'Ecriture sont les meilleurs livres élémentaires que la Providence ait pu donner pour fondement à l'instruction religieuse et morale des peuples de l'antiquité, fait observer l'heureuse impulsion que

l'intelligence humaine a reçue de la promulgation de vérités présentées simplement comme des faits et sans développement de leurs preuves, telles que l'unité de Dieu, l'immortalité de l'âme, etc., et se montre ensuite persuadé que, de même que la raison, stimulée par cette révélation, a cherché avec succès les prémisses de propositions qui n'avaient d'abord eu, pour ainsi dire, qu'un caractère historique, les dogmes de la Trinité, du péché originel, de la satisfaction offerte par le Fils de Dieu, etc., se trouveraient aussi un jour philosophiquement justifiés et rattachés, par le progrès des sciences morales, au système général des connaissances humaines *. Ce n'est pas ici le lieu d'exposer les idées ingénieuses par lesquelles Lessing lui-même plaide la cause de ces dogmes au tribunal de la raison ; nous nous bornerons à faire observer que l'attente de cet esprit vaste et lumineux n'a point été trompée, et que les essais plus ou moins heureux de lier ces doctrines mystérieuses à des vérités du domaine de l'expérience et de la philosophie se multiplient sous nos yeux, non seulement dans les écoles de théologie, mais dans les productions de savans, de tout ordre, étrangers par état à l'enseignement religieux. L'Angleterre, de tout temps riche en exemples de gens du monde se portant défenseurs publics de la religion, a vu dernièrement un avocat distingué †, prouver avec une admirable force de raisonnement la parfaite conformité des dogmes chrétiens avec les besoins de l'homme et les principes de la raison ; mais, dans la patrie de Bacon, Boyle, Newton, Locke, Bentley, Dutton, West, Beattie, Jenyns, Samuel Johnson, William Jones, Gregory, Wilberforce, etc., etc., on est accoutumé au spectacle édifiant d'hommes de toute profession déposant le fruit de leurs méditations au pied de la croix.

Le but que nous nous proposons spécialement nous ramène dans un pays où les ministres de la religion ont eu plus rarement pour auxiliaires des personnes étrangères à l'état ecclésiastique. Lorsqu'après une crise de scepticisme et de superbe dédain de la raison pour tout ce qui n'est pas le produit de sa libre spéculation, on voit s'augmenter le nombre des savans et des gens de lettres qui professent les doctrines distinctives du christianisme, et qui s'efforcent d'en appuyer la crédibilité sur les sciences particulières qu'ils ont cultivées avec éclat, n'est-on pas en droit d'affirmer que ce sont autant de symptômes d'une amélioration de l'opinion en matière de foi ? Et, dans la supposition, fort vraisemblable, que ce mouvement est, si non donné, au moins partagé et secondé par les théologiens, n'annonce-t-il pas clairement une tendance qu'ils ne pourraient contrarier, sans se mettre en opposition avec les besoins du siècle et sans trahir ou compromettre les intérêts de la religion ?

* Voyez les §§. 73—76, p. 67 et suiv. Le célèbre chef de la dernière école qui a illustré la philosophie allemande, *F. W. G. Schelling*, donne à cette idée de Lessing son entier assentiment. (P. 506 de ses *Recherches sur l'essence de la liberté de l'homme*, celui de ses écrits où il a déployé le plus d'originalité et de profondeur).

† Nous devons la publication en français des *Réflexions de M. Thomas Erskine sur l'évidence intrinsèque de la vérité du Christianisme* (Paris, 1822), à une dame aussi illustre par l'étendue de son esprit et par ses vertus que par son rang et son nom. Elle a enrichi un ouvrage excellent d'une préface non moins remarquable.

Voici des hommes, pris dans quatre branches différentes où ils brillent au premier rang, et connus par des déclarations favorables aux croyances qui ont été ébranlées ou combattues par plusieurs des écoles de théologie en Allemagne. Je citerai d'abord la profession de Jean Müller, que l'Europe a proclamé l'historien le plus savant des temps modernes. " Tu me demanderas," dit-il dans une lettre à son frère, lui-même écrivain spirituel et distingué, " par quel moyen je me suis convaincu de l'origine divine de Celui qui est venu annoncer au monde l'immortalité. Je ne parlerai pas du sentiment intérieur de la vérité qui pour mon cœur est une preuve suffisante; mais je te demanderai si, en supposant que tu n'eusses jamais vu le soleil et que, par un beau jour, ton œil suivant jusqu'à leur origine tous les rayons qui sortent de cet astre pour éclairer l'univers, eût reconnu le point d'où ils partent tous, je te demanderai si, en ce cas, tu pourrais douter que ce centre fût le soleil? Or, c'est ce qui m'arrive: plus j'étudie l'histoire, et mieux je vois que les plus grands événemens de l'antiquité allaient tous, par un merveilleux enchaînement, au but que le Maître de l'univers s'était proposé, de faire paraître le Christ avec cette doctrine dans le temps le plus propre à lui faire prendre racine *."

A côté de cet épanchement d'une conviction profonde qui a pour garantie les premières opinions de Müller, bien éloignées de ces nouvelles lumières, nous placerons les pages où sont résumées les recherches d'un homme qui, héritier de l'érudition de Heyne et de son influence, règne dans la connaissance de l'antiquité et de ses religions, comme Müller régnait dans les autres branches de l'histoire. En terminant son immense et beau travail, intitulé : *Symbolique ou Mythologie des anciens peuples*, M. Fréd. Creuzer présente (vol. IV. p. 596 et suiv.) les dogmes de l'incarnation du Fils de Dieu, de notre réconciliation avec la Divinité en Christ et du péché originel, comme les doctrines les plus conformes aux plus hautes spéculations de la raison et les plus appropriées aux besoins de l'esprit et du cœur humain, tels qu'ils sont dévoilés par le vaste tableau des religions de l'antiquité, contenu dans ce grand ouvrage.

Voulez-vous maintenant pour auxiliaire de l'orthodoxie un de ces philosophes qui ont suivi et partagé de nos jours tous les efforts de la raison spéculative et sondé toutes les profondeurs des systèmes de métaphysique les plus abstrus? Ouvrez le traité de *Philosophie du Christianisme* de Fr. Köppen; vous verrez (vol. II. p. 30 et suiv.) l'un des dogmes mentionnés tout à l'heure, le péché originel, cet article fondamental de la foi chrétienne, établi par des raisonnemens purement philosophiques.

La science aussi nous offre ses secours. Un médecin très-distingué, de Leipzig, qui a porté un nouveau jour dans plusieurs parties de la physiologie, le docteur J. Chr. Aug. Heinroth, a publié récemment un *Traité d'Anthropologie*, auquel les personnes mêmes pour lesquelles l'esprit religieux, dans lequel il est écrit, n'a aucun attrait, reconnaissent un mérite éminent, des vues de haute philosophie et l'enchaînement scientifique le plus rigoureux. Cet ouvrage, l'une des productions du savoir et de l'esprit philosophique les plus remarquables par l'originalité, des vues et la finesse des aperçus, présente le tableau le plus complet de la vie humaine dans ses conditions, ses manifestations et ses rapports.

* Œuvres de J. Müller, T. XIV. p. 299.

Après avoir décrit les conditions organiques et psychologiques de l'existence humaine, et signalé la foi, telle que l'Écriture la présente, comme seule base, seul guide sûr de l'exercice de nos facultés, M. Heinroth montre que l'homme, en abandonnant ce guide, sort de la sphère naturelle et primitive de son développement, et perd le point d'appui de sa force, avec tout moyen de mettre unité et ensemble dans les fonctions diverses de la vie. Passant ensuite aux conditions spéciales auxquelles est soumise la nature humaine, par les déterminations de sexe, d'âge, de tempérament, de constitution intellectuelle et d'énergie morale, différemment graduées dans les individus, l'auteur déroule le vaste tableau des rapports de l'homme à la nature, à ses semblables et au souverain bien. Cette partie de l'ouvrage offre la défense des doctrines bibliques sur la chute de l'homme, le péché originel et l'avenir du genre humain. On y trouve une spirituelle esquisse des âges de l'humanité, l'histoire du règne successif des sens, de l'imagination, de l'esprit, de la raison, et l'exposé des causes qui ont fait prédominer l'une ou l'autre de ces facultés chez les différents peuples qui ont figuré sur la scène du monde, et de l'influence que ces causes ont exercée sur les destinées humaines. Un chapitre est consacré au parallèle des races qui habitent le globe, et présente des vues ingénieuses sur le rôle médiateur que les juifs pourraient un jour être appelés à jouer entre les nations de l'Asie orientale que l'auteur appelle immobiles ou stationnaires (les Chinois, Mongols, Tibétains, Indous, etc.) et les habitants de l'Asie antérieure, de l'Europe, de l'Amérique, etc. qui sont dans un mouvement progressif vers un ordre de choses idéal.

“ Les juifs, dit M. Heinroth, sont peut-être destinés à détruire ce contraste et à préparer par leur interposition, la fusion de ces masses hétérogènes dans un empire soumis à la raison divine. Représentons-nous ce peuple se tournant enfin vers la lumière, qui a paru chez lui dans toute sa gloire, et qu'il s'obstine encore à méconnaître ce peuple qui allie l'imagination à la constance, la fixité orientale à la mobilité, à la perfectibilité des nations de l'Occident, représentons-nous Israël éclairé par cette lumière et pénétré de ces rayons célestes, nous apercevrons sans peine, dans son intervention, le lien qui pourra former l'union de la vieille Asie avec l'espèce humaine Européo-Américaine.”

Dans la dernière partie de son livre, M. Heinroth considère la nature de l'homme, telle que la physiologie, l'histoire et l'analyse philosophique la lui ont montrée, dans ses rapports avec la révélation et avec le salut en Christ. Là, comme dans tout le reste de ce beau *Traité d'Anthropologie*, des théories aussi profondes que lumineuses répandent un nouveau jour sur toutes les phases de notre existence présente et future, sur l'origine du mal et sur cette vie en Dieu à laquelle l'auteur subordonne tous les systèmes de l'organisme et de l'intelligence, si savamment exposés dans le cours de son ouvrage.

On pense bien quelle sensation a dû faire en Allemagne une production pareille. Tandis qu'elle est un sujet de joie pour les disciples du Sauveur, elle a été la cause d'une surprise désagréable pour les nouveaux réformateurs de la théologie. Le mérite du livre et la réputation de l'auteur ne peuvent cependant être révoqués en doute, même par l'esprit de parti. Dans un célèbre journal littéraire, où l'on accueille, avec une joie plus ou moins bien déguisée, les idées subversives de la croyance en une révélation surhumaine, et où l'on dépécie habituellement tous

les écrits favorables à cette croyance, voici comment l'Anthropologie du docteur Heinroth est caractérisée.

“ M. H. est médecin et philosophe en dépit du mal qu'il dit de la philosophie ; il possède toutes les qualités nécessaires à l'exécution de la tâche qu'il s'est imposée ; initié dans les lois de la vie, dans celles de l'ordre physique et moral, il en a saisi et peint tous les traits avec autant de vérité que de profondeur ; il les a puisés dans la nature intime de l'homme, les a développés de main de maître, et a laissé sur ses tableaux l'empreinte d'une sagacité peu commune. Mais sa philosophie a une couleur mystique et se perd dans les régions de la foi. La foi, et notamment la foi orthodoxe, est le fondement et la couronne de son édifice anthropologique, et cette doctrine s'y présente avec une conséquence et une rigueur d'enchaînement qui feraient honneur à un traité de théologie dogmatique. Nous ne voulons en tirer matière à aucun reproche ; l'excellent auteur est si plein de ces sentimens, il s'exprime avec tant de précision et d'énergie, qu'il ne viendra à l'idée de personne de révoquer en doute sa sincérité. Il avoue lui-même avoir donné à son ouvrage un caractère religieux tellement orthodoxe, qu'il aurait, dit-il, *naguère, été scandale et folie à une génération se qualifiant d'éclairée, comme il le sera aux anti-mystiques du jour*. Toutefois l'auteur de l'analyse ne peut cacher qu'il désapprouve ce mélange de discussions théologiques et anthropologiques, et qu'il voit avec étonnement la foi prêchée ici dans sa forme la plus sévère, et l'anthropologie ne faire que l'office d'échelle pour s'élever de ce monde de poussière dans le ciel de la foi chrétienne ; car M. Heinroth ne se contente pas de défendre le christianisme et la révélation, comme émanation immédiate de Dieu, il présente avec enthousiasme la doctrine de la rédemption comme le point culminant de la révélation et la base de la religion *.”

Bien que nous nous soyons ôté l'espace que nous destinions à d'autres réflexions plus directement en rapport avec l'occasion de cet article, nous osons croire que nos lecteurs ne nous blâmeront pas d'avoir donné quelque étendue à l'annonce d'un ouvrage si remarquable par les sentimens qu'il respire et par les indices qu'il fournit sur les heureux changemens arrivés dans l'opinion publique d'une contrée voisine et dans la tendance religieuse des travaux de ses écrivains. Cette tendance se manifeste peut-être davantage encore par les pas rétrogrades de plusieurs des théologiens qui semblaient marcher à la tête des novateurs et par la précaution qu'ils prennent de se placer dans un point de vue qui leur donne le moyen de mettre leurs théories en contact avec l'orthodoxie. C'est ainsi que le docteur *Schleiermacher* s'efforce, dans son *Exposé de la Foi chrétienne* †, de montrer que la manière dont il entend l'œuvre de Christ dans la délivrance spirituelle de l'homme, ne se borne point à l'amélioration morale opérée par la pureté de sa doctrine et par l'ascendant de son exemple. Autre part, il se donne beaucoup de peine ‡ pour éloigner l'idée que ses définitions sont

* Allg. Lit. Zeit. Oct. 1823, No. 270.

† Vol. II. (1822), §. 109, p. 167 ; §§. 121, 122, p. 252—268, surtout 287 et 288. Il prouve l'impuissance naturelle de l'homme pour le bien, ib. p. 30 et suiv.

‡ Vol. I. p. 93—112, surtout, p. 97 et 105. Cependant le § 19 et son commentaire renferment plusieurs expressions ambiguës, et se prêtent, comme tout l'ouvrage, au sens panthéistique que la Gazette littéraire de Halle lui impute

favorables au rationalisme, et qu'elles assimilent Jésus-Christ à d'autres bienfaiteurs de l'humanité.

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1. EVANGELISCHE KIRCHENZEITUNG, etc. : Gazette ecclésiastique évangélique, rédigée par une société de théologiens allemands, sous la direction de M. le Dr. HENGSTENBERG, professeur à l'Université de Berlin. Il en paraît deux numéros par semaine, composés chacun d'une feuille de 4 pages à deux colonnes, in 4^o, à dater du 1^{er} juillet 1827.

2. TÜBINGER ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR THEOLOGIE, etc. : Feuille périodique consacrée à la théologie, par les professeurs de la Faculté de théologie à l'Université de Tubingue, et publiée par le Dr. J. C. F. STEUDEL ; 1^{re} livraison. Tubingue, chez C. F. OSIANDER, 1828 ; in 8^o de 291 pages.

POUR apprécier l'importance d'une production littéraire, on peut se placer dans deux différens points de vue. Si on la juge en elle-même, c'est sa valeur intrinsèque et le service qu'elle rend à la branche de connaissances à laquelle elle ap-

sans détour (1823, mai, Nos. 115—117). Sans porter une accusation aussi directe, je ne voudrais pas, avec l'estimable auteur de la traduction des paragraphes du premier volume, insérée dans les Mélanges de religion (mai 1824, p. 251), affirmer que cette nouvelle production du célèbre théologien Berlinoïis est faite pour dissiper toutes les préventions élevées contre ses opinions en matière de religion. Car, en reconnaissant (§. 19.) "à toute société religieuse, qui repose sur une histoire particulière, et dont les membres offrent dans leurs sentimens un caractère commun d'une piété de nature déterminée, le droit de s'attribuer une doctrine positive et de la qualifier de révélée," il comprend sous cette définition non seulement les Eglises juive et chrétienne, mais la communauté fondée par Mahomet (Voy. p. 105.) Pour s'assurer du sens dans lequel le docteur S. prend le mot de *révélation*, nous n'avons qu'à rapprocher les assertions suivantes. Il dit positivement (p. 102, l. 6 et suiv.) que, dans la signification la plus favorable à une intervention immédiate de Dieu, la révélation pourrait être définie : commencement d'une vie nouvelle, premier développement d'une force assoupie, et, comme telle, rapportée à l'action de la Divinité. Il ajoute qu'à ce titre Jésus-Christ doit être regardé comme le degré le plus élevé de toute révélation ; et on pourrait croire, en comparant la page 97 où Schl. repousse toute dérivation de la religion de Jésus de la doctrine des Esséniens, qu'il admet l'origine surnaturelle de l'Evangile. Mais voici ce qu'on lit p. 101 : "Quant à ce qui concerne des opérations ou une influence immédiate de Dieu, l'univers seul dans sa totalité peut être envisagé sous ce jour, tandis que tous les faits particuliers de l'ordre physique ou moral sont en connexité avec d'autres faits dans l'espace et le temps, et qu'il est impossible de prouver qu'ils ne sont pas nés, d'après les lois de la causalité, du concours universel des événemens." Pag. 104, l. 4 et suiv. "Il reste toujours possible que la plus sublime révélation a eu lieu conformément aux lois générales du cours des choses, tel que Dieu l'a ordonné, et spécialement en conformité avec le développement régulier de la nature humaine."

partient, qu'on doit considérer; et le critique qui en présente l'analyse s'attachera à faire ressortir ce que l'ouvrage qu'il annonce ajoute, soit pour le fond, soit pour la forme, aux richesses déjà acquises à la science qui en est l'objet. Sous un autre aspect, une publication nouvelle, lors même qu'elle ne peut revendiquer ce mérite, a de justes droits à l'attention des hommes qui aiment à suivre les mouvemens de l'opinion, quand elle a été provoquée par un besoin généralement senti, et qu'elle manifeste la tendance des esprits. Il est évident que c'est sous ce dernier rapport qu'un nouveau journal demande à être envisagé; et, si les principes qu'il professe tranchent sur ceux qui régnaient dans les feuilles contemporaines du même genre universellement accréditées, son succès offrira plus d'un titre à la curiosité et à l'intérêt.

La *Gazette ecclésiastique évangélique*, publiée à Berlin, est, par beaucoup de raisons, un phénomène moral digne, à un haut degré, de l'une et de l'autre. Pour l'envisager dans toute son importance, il faut bien connaître la scène de son apparition; mais il est difficile d'en donner une juste idée à ceux qui n'ont qu'une connaissance superficielle de la littérature théologique des Allemands. Cependant, le but même des *Archives du Christianisme* ne nous permet pas de passer sous silence une publication si remarquable. Pour motiver l'exception que nous croyons devoir faire aux règles que nous nous sommes prescrites, et qui nous défendent toute discussion d'un intérêt plus littéraire que religieux, nous croyons devoir retracer quelques-uns des traits qui sont particulièrement en saillie dans l'état de la théologie allemande, tel qu'il se présente à l'observation depuis plus d'un demi-siècle.

Vers l'an 60 du siècle dernier, deux influences se réunirent pour opérer une révolution dans la manière de comprendre et d'enseigner le christianisme. L'une, purement extérieure, partit de la cour d'un grand roi, qui se délassait de ses travaux, et cherchait l'oubli dans la société de quelques hommes de lettres étrangers, esclaves des jouissances d'une civilisation corruptrice, et habiles à se cacher à eux-mêmes et à leurs admirateurs leur misère morale et leur avilissement, sous les nuages d'un scepticisme élégant et frivole. Cependant le rôle que de beaux esprits incrédules jouaient à Potsdam, n'aurait pas eu le pouvoir d'ébranler les croyances d'un peuple instruit et sérieux, et l'ascendant des mœurs et des opinions françaises aurait laissé moins de traces encore en Allemagne qu'en Angleterre, où elles avaient été répandues dans les hautes classes par les courtisans des Stuarts et plus tard par Bolingbroke, si les théologiens novateurs, auxquels la littérature française donna l'impulsion, en grand partie à leur insu, n'avaient pas trouvé sous la main des armes que leur fournissaient les écoles de philologie et de théologie les plus distinguées de leur pays. Bien loin de nourrir, comme les écrivains qu'ils redoutaient plus encore qu'ils ne sympathisaient avec eux, des sentimens hostiles contre la religion chrétienne, et portés à la défendre plutôt qu'à lui nuire, ils se bercèrent de l'illusion qu'en en éloignant tout ce qui choquait sinon la raison, du moins ceux qui se donnaient pour ses interprètes, ils rendraient au christianisme son lustre, réduiraient au silence tous les moqueurs, et sauveraient du naufrage le vaisseau allégé. La plupart d'entre eux, appartenant par leur talent au premier rang des auteurs classiques de leur nation, estimés pour les services qu'ils avaient rendus à sa littérature, et respectés à cause

de leur position dans l'Eglise et de leurs vertus privées, se virent, dès le début de leurs projets de réforme, singulièrement secondés par la *Bibliothèque universelle allemande*, journal qui, par un mérite réel de style et de goût, non moins que par la célébrité de ses rédacteurs, s'empara de l'opinion des classes studieuses, et, pendant plus de trente ans, exerça une espèce de dictature dans tout le domaine des sciences morales et de la littérature. L'empire de ce journal sur les gens du monde et sur les gens lettrés, se perpétua et s'étendit par l'établissement d'un grand nombre d'autres feuilles périodiques qui adoptèrent les mêmes principes, et continuèrent l'œuvre de la réduction ou de la purification de la partie dogmatique du christianisme, aux applaudissemens des corps savans et de presque tous les chefs de l'enseignement.

Ceux-là seuls qui ont vécu dans les universités d'Allemagne et suivi le mouvement des esprits et des doctrines pendant les deux dernières générations, peuvent se faire quelque idée de l'entraînement qui les porta au-devant de toutes les conjectures, de toutes les hypothèses opposées non-seulement à l'ancienne orthodoxie, mais à toute révélation, à toute religion fondée sur une base historique. Pour acquérir de la réputation, pour obtenir de l'avancement, il fallait se signaler par quelque combinaison ingénieuse, quelque assertion hardie qui ébranlât une des données, ou l'authenticité d'un des écrits sur lesquels s'appuyaient les défenseurs de l'ancienne foi. On ne demandait à ces travaux que deux choses, qu'ils fussent savans, et que leurs résultats jetassent de l'incertitude sur des faits ou des points de doctrine qui avaient été admis auparavant.

Des circonstances, inhérentes à l'organisation des universités allemandes, contribuèrent singulièrement à favoriser, à accélérer ce mouvement révolutionnaire sur le terrain des antiques croyances. Les jeunes professeurs avaient de faibles appointemens. Pour se procurer les moyens de vivre avec quelque aisance et se frayer le chemin aux places mieux payées, il fallait que leur enseignement attirât par son éclat la foule des étudiants et l'attention du public. Il s'agissait de captiver l'une et l'autre le plus tôt possible, et des recherches de longue haleine, des travaux mûris par le temps et la réflexion, tels que ceux auxquels les coryphées de l'érudition et les grands critiques du dix-septième siècle, et généralement les savans Anglais et Hollandais, plus libéralement salariés, avaient consacré toute une laborieuse vie, eussent beaucoup trop tard conduit à leur but de jeunes gens pressés d'améliorer leur condition humble et précaire. Il y avait pour eux nécessité d'arriver promptement à la renommée, et par elle à la faveur de la jeunesse universitaire. Aucun moyen aussi sûr et aussi expéditif de l'obtenir, que de se hâter de prendre rang parmi les novateurs, et de signaler son entrée dans la carrière de l'instruction académique par une opinion hasardée, par un point de vue insolite qui ouvrit une séduisante perspective de changemens doctrinaux. Sans doute la témérité ne suffisait pas : on exigeait preuves d'esprit et de savoir. Mais il se présentait facilement à un jeune homme, doué de talent, et qui cherchait à jeter de l'éclat sur le début de ses travaux, quelque idée piquante, quelque vue qui frappât l'attention des amis nombreux de discussions théologiques, et que les études fortes et compréhensives auxquelles il s'était livré, comme il est d'usage dans les collèges allemands, lui fournissaient richement le moyen de défendre, d'orner, de rendre plausibles et précieuses. Quelle en était la conséquence ? Il

avait affirmé dans une thèse inaugurale, dans un premier essai littéraire, que tel livre ou telle partie de livre, jusqu'ici réputés authentiques, étaient d'un âge postérieur, que l'interprétation d'un passage important, universellement adoptée, était mal fondée, que telle doctrine, censée fondamentale, était d'une mince importance, ou même erronée : le voilà, soit par amour-propre, soit par l'habitude de ne plus envisager l'objet en litige que sous une face, engagé à soutenir désormais contre toute attaque, et contre ses propres doutes, une assertion que des recherches nouvelles et plus approfondies lui auraient fait abandonner s'il ne s'était hâté de la hasarder parce qu'elle devait être le prix de la réputation dont il était pressé de jouir.

A cette position universitaire des jeunes professeurs en théologie, distingués par leurs talens et leurs connaissances, il faut ajouter les antécédens de leurs études préparatoires, pour faciliter l'explication d'un des phénomènes moraux les plus remarquables que présente l'histoire de l'esprit humain, celui de voir une nation d'un caractère sérieux et solide, aussi profondément religieuse que circonspecte et réfléchie, si long-temps entraînée par toutes les directions de sa pensée et de sa littérature vers un ordre d'idées subversif de toute croyance et une religion appuyée sur des faits historiques. Pour se rendre habile en Allemagne à remplir les fonctions du saint ministère, et surtout une chaire de professeur académique, ceux qui s'y destinent sont instruits d'abord avec un soin tout particulier dans toutes les branches de la philologie et de la philosophie qui sont en contact avec l'esprit et les langues de l'antiquité, avec les principes de métaphysique et de psychologie liés à ceux de la religion rationnelle ou positive. C'est une marche fondée dans la nature des choses ; nul doute que le meilleur théologien ne soit celui qui, à l'étude des saints Livres, sous l'assistance divine, apporte les connaissances et les méditations du philologue et du philosophe profond. Mais il ne faut pas que les intérêts de ces sciences préparatoires s'emparent entièrement de lui et prévalent sur ceux qui lui sont spécialement confiés, sur ceux de l'homme tout entier, faible et pervers. Elles s'efforcent de tout comprendre ; ce qu'elles ne peuvent expliquer leur est indifférent et suspect ; elles aspirent à élargir leur domaine, qui est celui de la curiosité et des intérêts intellectuels, aux dépens de besoins de notre nature, tout différens et plus sacrés ; et, comme en aggrandissant leur sphère, elles reculent l'horizon de l'esprit humain, elles flattent son goût pour l'indépendance et le portent à favoriser, à légitimer, à chérir leurs usurpations sur les croyances qui ont d'autres racines que l'entendement et la raison spéculative.

Si déjà par leur nature et par la tendance qu'elles impriment à leurs élèves, la philologie et la philosophie sont en état de sourde hostilité contre la foi religieuse, combien leur influence ne deviendra-t-elle pas plus nuisible encore aux croyances qui reposent sur des sentimens d'une autre origine, et qui blessent l'orgueil de la raison théorétique, quand ces branches de savoir sont enseignées à l'adolescence par des instituteurs, si non incrédules, au moins disposés à étendre leur juridiction au détriment de la foi chrétienne, et fort indifférens à ce qui peut l'affaiblir et la miner ? Il faudrait être resté complètement étranger à ce qui a fait, dans les derniers temps, la gloire de la Germanie lettrée, pour ignorer l'immense empire qu'ont exercé, sur la direction des esprits et des doctrines, les écoles philologiques et philosophiques qui ont illustré l'Allemagne depuis un demi-siècle. Celles

de Heyne et de F. A. Wolf ont changé la face de la critique historique, et déplacé les points de vue sous lesquels on était accoutumé à voir les origines et les phases de la civilisation, des institutions, des cultes, etc. et à juger les principales époques de l'antiquité. L'école de Kant a plus fortement encore remué tout le terrain cultivé par ses devanciers; on peut dire qu'il a opéré un revirement complet dans l'aspect philosophique des affaires humaines, et habitué la presque totalité de ses compatriotes lettrés à considérer les facultés de l'homme comme le moule, la mesure, les arbitres de toutes choses, et la raison comme juge compétent et sans appel des intérêts moraux et religieux de notre espèce. De ces écoles sont sortis l'immense majorité des savans qui ont composé les facultés des lettres et de théologie depuis plus de quarante ans en Allemagne, et qui ont formé et les ministres de la religion et les professeurs qui remplissent les chaires dans les universités du centre et du nord de cette terre classique de l'érudition et de la philosophie. Une autre circonstance ajoute un poids nouveau aux conséquences qui découlent de notre exposé de l'ordre d'études prescrit aux futurs ministres de l'Evangile. La plupart d'entre eux, incertains sur leur destination, obligés de chercher à se placer comme instituteurs dans des familles nobles ou dans des écoles secondaires, en attendant qu'ils pussent être appelés aux fonctions ecclésiastiques, ne considéraient le saint ministère que comme une occupation éloignée et subsidiaire, une application facile des connaissances acquises dans les gymnases et aux universités, et n'y donnaient une attention sérieuse qu'à dater du moment où ils entraient en possession d'un bénéfice et en activité pastorale. Souvent l'attrait qu'ont les études d'histoire et de philosophie, et l'habitude d'y consacrer la plus grande partie de leur temps les accompagnaient dans leur nouvelle situation, et les pasteurs, préoccupés de leurs souvenirs académiques, suivaient avec prédilection les combats qui se livraient sur le champ de la philologie et de la métaphysique, et donnaient la préférence aux journaux où les vérités de l'Evangile étaient subordonnées aux résultats des recherches de la critique historique et de la philosophie du jour.

Et quels sont les principes qui règnent dans tout le domaine de ces investigations? Tout subordonner au tribunal de l'intelligence humaine, ne rien admettre qu'elle ne puisse comprendre et ramener à sa cause, considérer comme douteux ou suspect ce qui n'est pas réductible à des notions claires et à des faits non-seulement attestés par des témoins irrécusables, mais conformes aux lois de la psychologie et de la métaphysique en crédit, voilà la règle suprême dont l'application décide de la crédibilité des événemens, de la vérité des doctrines dans ces divisions du savoir. En leur consacrant leurs plus belles années, celles où nous contractons pour la vie des habitudes intellectuelles, et nous adoptons des objets et des travaux d'affection ordinairement exclusive, les ministres de l'Evangile apporteront dans les études et dans les fonctions que leur imposeront leurs nouveaux devoirs, un esprit et des dispositions préjudiciables aux croyances positives d'une religion révélée. Accoutumés qu'ils sont à ne se soumettre qu'aux lois de l'entendement, et inclinés à accorder en tout la prééminence à l'intérêt scientifique, ils obéiront, même à leur insu, à la tendance de repousser ou d'atténuer et d'affaiblir tout ce qu'ils ne pourront encadrer dans leurs connaissances favorites, ni incorporer dans le système d'idées qui est devenu pour eux partie intégrante

de leur vie morale. Dans toutes les questions qui concernent les matières de foi, juges prévenus, ils pencheront pour les décisions qui auront de l'analogie avec les opérations auxquelles leurs précédentes études les ont habitués ; l'importance pratique, les effets nuisibles que ces décisions pourront entraîner pour la moralité et la tranquillité du peuple, disparaîtront devant l'exigence de principes abstraits ; l'aiguillon de la curiosité, le désir d'aggrandir le domaine de l'intelligence, la satisfaction de voir reculer les limites de recherches dont la raison s'enorgueillit aux dépens du sens naturel de l'Écriture-Sainte, exerceront une influence secrète et corruptrice ; leur voix prépondérante imposera silence aux paroles les plus claires des auteurs sacrés, comme aux intérêts moraux les plus évidens. Une combinaison savante qui révoquera en doute l'intégrité ou l'authenticité d'un livre, d'un passage jusqu'ici incontestés, une conjecture hardie, une explication ingénieuse qui lui ôteront sa force probante en dogmatique, trouveront des esprits avides de pareilles hypothèses, et préparés à les accueillir comme les conquêtes de la raison et du vrai savoir.

Ce que cette marche des études, cet ordre de travaux, cette succession d'époques dans la carrière d'un théologien allemand devaient produire, se présente en effet réalisé par l'histoire des doctrines religieuses durant les dernières générations. Sortis des écoles de *Heyne* et de *Kant*, envisageant comme délit contre la saine critique, comme crime de lèse-raison l'admission de tout fait, de tout enseignement qui rompait la chaîne naturelle des événemens historiques et du développement de l'esprit humain, les candidats au saint ministère arrivaient aux cours de théologie, et plus tard aux fonctions publiques avec le parti pris de ne voir dans les annales du peuple hébreu que des traditions mythiques, qui devaient être dégagées de leur enveloppe symbolique, et traduites du langage de l'antiquité dans la nôtre, pour se prêter à une narration ordinaire et rationnelle, de ne voir dans l'apparition de l'amour divin sur la terre, dans la venue du Rédempteur, que le plus haut degré d'énergie morale auquel l'homme fût parvenu par ses propres efforts, et avec les secours d'une éducation providentielle. A peu d'exceptions près, les universités les plus célèbres ne livrèrent bientôt aux fonctions académiques et pastorales, comme à la carrière littéraire que des jeunes gens, qui plaçaient Homère et Moïse, les Juges hébreux et l'Âge héroïque de la Grèce, les prophètes et des réformateurs ou des tribuns généreux, sur la même ligne, et qui vénéraient dans la personne du Sauveur, un Socrate juif, un organe et un martyr de la vérité, auteur de la meilleure philosophie pratique qui eût encore été prêchée aux peuples de l'antiquité, et maître de disciples qui ne s'élevèrent jamais à la hauteur de ses conceptions, et qui, bien que dignes d'admiration par leur dévouement à leur croyance, altérèrent la pureté de la doctrine de Jésus, en y mêlant leurs préjugés nationaux et leurs vues individuelles. Ceux qui révoqueraient en doute la vérité de ce tableau, se montreraient absolument étrangers à l'état de la théologie et de la littérature, tels que l'offrent depuis fort long-temps les neuf dixièmes au moins des ouvrages qui lui appartiennent, ainsi que les journaux les plus généralement répandus en Allemagne.

Il est vrai que des voix fidèles et courageuses ne cessèrent de rappeler les contemporains de l'énivrement de ces théories orgueilleuses et séductrices, à l'examen calme et loyal de leurs droits à la domination qu'ils usurpaient sur la Parole

de Dieu. Aujourd'hui que l'autorité que le rationalisme exerça si long-temps sur l'opinion commence à être ébranlée, et que des réclamations puissantes s'élèvent de toutes parts contre le joug qu'il fit tyranniquement peser sur les esprits, c'est un devoir strict de reconnaissance, que de renouveler dans les *Archives du Christianisme évangélique*, la mémoire des théologiens éclairés et probes qui, semblables aux *Wiefel* et aux *Huss*, conservateurs de la pureté de la foi dans les temps d'un autre genre d'égarement, en furent les dépositaires fidèles et les habiles défenseurs au moment où les néologues * étaient les distributeurs de la renommée, et les arbitres de l'avancement des fonctionnaires dans la carrière des honneurs, et où les écrivains qui combattirent ces novateurs, étaient honnis comme des ennemis des lumières, traités d'obscurans et tournés en ridicule dans tous les journaux accrédités. Parmi ces pieux et savans théologiens, brillent au premier rang l'immortel *Storr* et l'école de Tubingue. Depuis l'époque où les entrepreneurs de l'épuration doctrinale, que nous avons caractérisée, établirent leur domination sur les esprits jusqu'à nos jours, *Storr*, ses amis et ses élèves, parmi lesquels *Flatt*, *Suskind*, *Bengel* et *Steudel* se sont fait remarquer, exercèrent une censure aussi consciencieuse que vigilante, qui ne laissa pas une assertion hasardée, pas une hypothèse brillante et dangereuse, pas un sophisme hostile et spécieux sans réponse. Ils ne se contentèrent point de discuter les principales questions en litige dans des ouvrages étendus, aussi profonds que solides, tels que la dogmatique de *Storr*, son traité du but de l'Evangile de saint Jean, son commentaire de l'épître aux Hébreux, où le dogme de l'intime connexité de la mort de Christ avec le pardon du pécheur et avec le principe de la sanctification a été à jamais mis à l'abri des subtilités de l'exégèse rationaliste, au moins pour ceux qui admettent l'autorité des écrits apostoliques; pour suivre avec plus de soin tous les mouvemens de la littérature théologique et s'assurer qu'aucune des opinions mises à flot par le talent des novateurs n'échappât à leur attention, *Storr* et ses disciples s'associèrent pour la publication de recueils périodiques uniquement destinés à l'examen impartial de toutes les doctrines nouvelles, en théologie comme en philosophie, auxquelles la tendance des esprits et la réputation de leurs auteurs avaient procuré ou préparaient un favorable accueil. Le journal littéraire rédigé par les professeurs de l'université de Tubingue avait déjà depuis long-temps rendu ce service à ces sciences; mais c'est surtout dans le *Magasin de Flatt* (1792 à 1812, 17 parties,) et les *Archives de Bengel* (8 vol. en 4 parties chacun), qui le remplacèrent, et auxquelles succède aujourd'hui la *Feuille Périodique* que nous annonçons, qu'il faut chercher la série des écrits dans lesquels les vérités évangéliques ont été défendues contre les prétendus purificateurs, et leurs théories soumises à une critique aussi polie et charitable que savante et judicieuse. On y

* Lorsque les nouveaux réformateurs de la dogmatique, *Semler*, *Teller*, *Steinbart*, *Eberhard*, etc., eurent, vers 1770, commencé l'exécution de leurs desseins, ils furent d'abord, faute d'une autre dénomination suffisamment claire et concise, désignés par le nom de *Sociniens*; mais comme ils se récrièrent vivement contre cette assimilation à une secte décriée, l'usage prévalut bientôt de les distinguer, sous le titre de *Néologues* (fauteurs de doctrines nouvelles), d'avec les théologiens qui n'approuvaient pas leurs innovations.

remarque principalement les articles que *Storr* et ses collaborateurs ont opposés à des assertions presque passées en axiomes dans les écoles modernes ; celles-ci par exemples : que Jésus-Christ n'en a jamais appelé à ses miracles pour établir sa mission divine ; que les passages des Évangiles qui lui font prédire sa résurrection ne sont pas assez clairs, ou manquent d'authenticité ; que la doctrine orthodoxe de la rédemption est nuisible aux intérêts moraux ; que la religion mosaïque, a un caractère tout différent du théisme chrétien ; que la secte des Esséniens a fourni à Jésus les principes de sa morale ; que le Pentateuque est une épopée théocratique de date récente, etc. etc.

Mais, si aucune opinion téméraire et mal fondée ne peut se dérober à leur vigilance et à leur dialectique sévère, toute recherche solide, tout résultat de bon aloi, soit en exégèse soit en philosophie, les trouve disposés à l'accueillir sans prévention et à en tirer parti pour le perfectionnement de la théologie. Comme rien ne leur reste inconnu, rien aussi ne reste stérile entre leurs mains. On les trouve, par exemple, juges extrêmement équitables des travaux historiques et analytiques qui ont jeté plus de jour sur la critique sacrée et sur la nature morale de l'homme. En soumettant à un examen approfondi le livre de *Kant* sur la religion rationnelle, *Storr* s'est avant tout attaché à montrer que l'Évangile est en harmonie avec celles des doctrines du philosophe de Königsberg qui avaient reçu l'approbation des bons esprits, et que chaque fois que *Kant* hasardait des suppositions, ou se permettait des insinuations incompatibles avec le christianisme primitif et historique, il tombait en contradiction avec lui-même, et que les conséquences de son système ne conduisaient nullement à rejeter la révélation et sa partie mystérieuse. L'écrit dans lequel *Storr* a rempli cette tâche difficile, est un chef d'œuvre de discussion calme, profonde et victorieuse ; *Kant* lui-même lui a rendu hommage dans la préface de la seconde édition du livre analysé par le théologien de Tubingue *. On doit à M. le prélat de *Suskind* un traité † qu'on peut envisager comme le digne pendant de celui de son maître, et dans lequel il a mis à nu tout ce qu'il y avait de creux et de faux dans les idées de *Schelling* sur une distinction à faire dans la divinité entre le Dieu absolu et le Dieu qui se manifeste, entre le Dieu principe et le Dieu qui sort de lui-même, afin de pouvoir se prendre lui-même comme objet de sa propre intelligence, entre le Dieu implicite et explicite, entre le Dieu fond et condition de toute existence, et le Dieu qui en se développant tombe dans le temps, crée l'univers, et, en créant, subit ou accomplit une évolution qui en fait par degrés un Dieu personne. Cette doctrine règne dans tous les écrits de ceux qui s'intitulent philosophes de la nature, comme dans les écrits des théologiens qui en ont fait l'application à la dogmatique chrétienne (par exemple *Schleiermacher*,) et qui se retrouve dans les systèmes spéculatifs des gnostiques chez lesquels le premier acte du développement de l'essence

* L'écrit dont il est question, composé en latin et publié en 1793, in-4°, a été traduit en allemand et enrichi d'une dissertation remarquable sur les rapports de la notion de Révélation avec les principes du criticisme, par *J. F. Flatt*, 1795, in-8°.

† *Examen des doctrines schellingiennes sur Dieu, sur la création, sur la liberté, sur le bien et le mal.* Tubingue, chez Cotta, 1812. In-8° de 164 pages.

divine par lequel elle commence à exister pour elle-même, porte le nom d'intelligence ou concept de soi-même (*ἐνθούμησις ἑαυτοῦ*. Voy. *Néander*, des Systèmes gnostiques, p. 95. 98.) et aussi le nom de *logos*, fils de Dieu. *Suskind a*, dans l'écrit dont nous croyons utile de rappeler le souvenir, prouvée jusqu'à l'évidence que cette théorie fourmille de contradictions, qu'elle n'explique en aucune façon mieux que ne le faisait l'ancien spiritualisme, la genèse de la conscience, la création et l'origine du mal, qu'elle s'appuie en définitive sur un jeu de mots, en abusant étrangement de l'ambiguïté des termes *unité, variété, infini, différence, identité*, etc., qu'elle ne fait pas faire un pas aux solutions que la raison cherche à obtenir, et détruit complètement toute liberté morale et toute imputabilité des actions humaines.

On nous reprochera peut-être de nous être arrêtés, outre mesure, à retracer la mémoire de services rendus à la cause évangélique à une époque si fort antérieure à la nôtre. Mais comme la France lettrée se montre de plus en plus curieuse des discussions auxquelles s'est livrée l'Allemagne savante depuis plus d'un demi-siècle, il est à craindre que les personnes avides de les connaître, ne se laissent éblouir par la renommée des auteurs et des journaux qui ont été dans ce long intervalle les organes du parti des novateurs, et auxquels les fausses lumières, l'orgueil de quelques écoles, l'influence d'hommes à talent, ont donné et long-temps maintenu le sceptre de l'opinion, malgré les réclamations des amis de la vérité, qui n'ont cessé de protester contre l'engouement de la mode et la légèreté avec laquelle les nouvelles idées se propageaient comme conquête de la science, et qu'on peut comparer à cette poignée de défenseurs de la foi primitive, conservateurs de la pure doctrine de l'Evangile à travers les siècles d'ignorance, de barbarie et de corruption. Nous nous adressons aux Français entraînés par la réputation de quelques écrivains célèbres de l'Allemagne, et séduits par l'appareil d'érudition et le prestige de vues élevées qui répandent le charme d'un intérêt purement scientifique sur des théories sans fondement, et des hypothèses victorieusement réfutées. Qu'ils sachent que les objets de leur admiration, ces résultats de recherches philologiques et de spéculations métaphysiques, en apparence si profondes, ont été à chaque pas contrôlés, réduits à leur vraie valeur et exploités, en ce qu'ils pouvaient offrir d'utile, par des hommes supérieurs; de telle sorte que les doctrines vitales du christianisme, bien loin d'en recevoir aucune atteinte, en ont reçu un nouveau lustre, et au besoin un nouvel appui. Qu'ils sachent aussi qu'à toutes les époques de l'invasion et de l'empire du rationalisme, des penseurs, des savans, des écrivains du premier rang, se sont portés défenseurs de l'évangile. Il suffira de nommer *Ernesti, Nessel, Michaelis, Hess, Morus* parmi les exégètes; *Lovater, Reinhard, Draeseke, Ewald, Menken* parmi les prédicateurs; *Less, Seiler, Staüdlin, Schott, Baumgarten-Crusius, Kleuker, Tholuck, Neander, Heubner, Hahn* parmi les théologiens; *Claudius, de Moser, Hamann, Herder, Schroeckh, J. de Muller* parmi les moralistes et les historiens.

Mais, dira-t-on, comment se fait-il qu'en dépit de cette opposition énergique et imposante d'hommes du plus grand mérite, l'influence du néologisme se soit étendue, il faut bien le dire, sur la majorité des jeunes ministres, qu'elle ait été prépondérante dans le public lettré, et qu'elle ait tellement donné le ton aux journaux les plus accrédités, que tout chrétien attaché aux croyances positives,

ait passé pour un esprit borné et en arrière de son siècle et de l'état actuel des sciences, et que tout savant, tout penseur indépendant, et surtout tout professeur d'université qui voulait demeurer fidèle à l'ancienne foi, ait eu besoin, pour braver le ridicule qu'il attirait sur lui, d'un courage moral et d'une élévation d'âme qui ne manquent que trop souvent aux hommes les plus distingués par leurs facultés et leurs lumières ?

A cette question on pourrait faire dans les paroles de *saint Augustin* une réponse satisfaisante pour ceux qui connaissent le triste état du cœur de l'homme, et ses misérables faiblesses : *Si les chrétiens ont peur des railleries des païens, ils ne croiront rien, pas même la résurrection de Jésus-Christ* *. Ici se présente involontairement au souvenir la répugnance de plusieurs théologiens modernes de l'Allemagne à admettre le miracle cité en exemple par saint Augustin. Depuis que le *docteur Paulus*, dans son célèbre commentaire sur les *Évangiles*, a révoqué en doute la réalité de la mort de *Jésus-Christ*, et soutenu son opinion, dans la seconde édition de ce commentaire, contre les observations décisives du médecin *Gruner*, les rationalistes se sont plus ou moins ouvertement déclarés pour ce nouvel épurement de l'histoire évangélique. Voici comment s'exprime, sur les principaux événemens de la vie de notre Seigneur, et sur l'opinion que l'interprète éclairé de ses biographes s'en forme au flambeau d'une critique saine et philosophique, un théologien de l'université de Halle dans un traité de dogmatique chrétienne, dont cinq éditions faites en peu d'années, et l'adoption par plusieurs professeurs de théologie, comme manuel des étudiants qui suivent leur cours, prouvent l'influence et la popularité. Je choisis cet exemple, parce qu'il y a des personnes qui sont disposées à adoucir un passage tiré du même ouvrage †, comme offrant la

* *Nec enim ipsum Christum quòd tertio die resurrexit crederemus, si fides Christianorum cachinnum metueret paganorum.*

† Ce passage, lu avec attention et comparé avec toute la tendance du livre du docteur *Wegscheider*, fait de *Jésus* simplement un sage, aidé par la Providence divine de secours tout-à-fait particuliers, en qui et par qui la force divine opérant avec sagesse (le Verbe ou la Parole de Dieu. Jean, I. 1. 14.) en d'autres termes, la Providence de Dieu (SIVE *Providentia Dei*,) est réputée (traditum) s'être manifestée d'une façon merveilleuse (*mirum quantum*,) et qui est, pour ainsi dire (*quasi*, en quelque sorte,) le reflet de la Divinité elle-même (*quasi ipsius numinis, ἀπαύρασμα*. Hébr. I. 3. Le *quasi* est, certes, de trop quand on lit dans l'auteur sacré ce qui précède et ce qui suit les mots : *Étant la splendeur de sa gloire et l'image empreinte de sa Personne. Celui qui a fait le monde et soutient toutes choses par sa Parole puissante*, v. 2 et 3, n'est pas un simple organe de la Providence, un instrument dont elle s'est servie pour accomplir ses desseins.) En conséquence, dit en concluant le docteur *Wegscheider*, le dogme de la Trinité peut être ramené à cette formule : Dieu le Père s'est manifesté, par *Jésus-Christ*, aux hommes comme Esprit-Saint. Quelque soit l'opinion, ajoute-t-il, qu'on adopte sur ce dogme, elle a droit à la plus grande indulgence, pourvu qu'elle n'affaiblisse ou n'énervé pas les motifs qui nous portent à la vertu. (Mais c'est tout juste là le point essentiel. Les chrétiens qui trouvent ce dogme clairement enseigné dans l'Écriture, et qui croient en voir et qui en bénissent la connexité intime et indissoluble avec les autres doctrines révélées pour effectuer notre guérison morale, ne sauraient jamais considérer comme indifférente ou peu importante une diver-

profession de foi la plus conforme à la véritable doctrine chrétienne, sur celui des mystères que les rationalistes sont censés rejeter avec le moins d'hésitation, et parce que le paragraphe que nous allons transcrire renferme le résumé du *credo* des rationalistes allemands, présenté avec une franchise et une précision qui contrastent honorablement avec les ménagemens et l'hypocrisie de phrase, employés par un grand nombre d'entre eux pour ne pas blesser la multitude par une expo-

gence d'opinions sur ce point capital.) En terminant, le docteur Wegscheider recommande à ceux qui traitent de cette matière en public, d'user d'une grande circonspection, afin de ne pas imposer à la croyance des chrétiens plus éclairés une théorie qui répugnerait à leur conscience, et qui leur pèserait comme un joug ou un fardeau, c'est-à-dire qui révolterait leur raison (car c'est là bien évidemment le sens des expressions : *Ne conscientia oneretur christianorum fide provectorum*,) et de ne pas choquer non plus ou froisser dans leur sentiment les personnes plus faibles d'intelligence et peu éclairées (*ne imbecilliorum religio offensionis aliquod capiat*. Ib. p. 198.) Nous voilà donc, au sein de l'Eglise de Celui qui a voulu que la Bonne-Nouvelle fût annoncée sur les toits, qui en toute occasion a marqué son horreur pour l'hypocrisie, son aversion pour toute réticence, pour tout ménagement pusillanime lorsqu'il s'agit des intérêts de la vérité, de cette vérité qu'il est de l'essence de sa religion de considérer comme toujours utile, jamais nuisible, toujours de devoir, et jamais à cacher timidement sous un boisseau ; nous voilà, au sein de l'Eglise qu'il a fondée au prix de son sang et après une lutte ouverte avec les ténèbres et le mensonge, nous voilà arrivés, par les prétendus progrès de l'interprétation de son Evangile, à avoir une double doctrine, l'une pour les forts, l'autre pour les faibles, à être dépouillés de cette glorieuse prérogative du christianisme d'offrir à tous ses disciples la même vérité et toute la vérité, et d'être affranchis de cette politique d'augures qui ne peuvent se rencontrer sans rire, aussi dégradante pour ceux qui la mettent en œuvre, par quelque motif spécieux de bien public que ce soit, qu'inique et injurieuse envers ceux qu'on tient dans une si humiliante tutelle. Je suis convaincu qu'en y regardant de près, ceux qui connaissent la manière large, franche et probe des unitaires anglais, cesseront de donner leur approbation à cette profession de foi du docteur Wegscheider, si ambiguë et si entortillée, et finiront par y voir ce qui y est, le rationalisme pur et simple, mal déguisé sous des précautions indignes de la loyauté et de la candeur qui, d'ailleurs, nous aimons à le répéter, distinguent Wegscheider avantagusement d'une foule d'autres théologiens à face de Janus. Je puis, sans risquer de me tromper, assurer les défenseurs de la foi de M. Wegscheider, que ce théologien sourira, s'il en a connaissance, des efforts bénévoles tentés en faveur de son orthodoxie. Bien loin de partager cette tendre sollicitude pour sa réputation de croyant en une révélation surnaturelle, il répugnerait beaucoup à être considéré comme reconnaissant dans la personne de Jésus de Nazareth autre chose que le plus illustre des sages et des bienfaiteurs de l'humanité, secondé par un concours providentiel d'antécédens historiques et d'événemens contemporains. Il redouterait le *cachinum provectorum*. Les docteurs à double doctrine, une pour le peuple, l'autre pour les gens éclairés, ne sentent-ils pas que ce mal moral que fait une duplicité, un manège si avilissant, est positif et incalculable, tandis que le bien qui résulte d'une pareille prudence est au moins problématique et chétif en face de l'obligation morale qu'ils foulent aux pieds ?

sition trop crue de leur doctrine ésotérique. Nous traduisons le § 121 (p. 263 de la 2^e édition) de la dogmatique de *Wegscheider* :

*Il en est de l'histoire de Jésus-Christ comme de beaucoup d'autres histoires du même genre qui nous sont restées de l'antiquité. Expliquée selon les règles de la philosophie et de la critique, elle ne laisse aucun doute que Jésus a été un homme, et qu'il n'a rien eu dans sa destinée que d'humain. Car si l'on dépouille les faits de sa vie, rapportés dans le Nouveau-Testament, de ce voile mythique et de tous les ornemens poétiques dont ses historiens les ont enveloppés, il reste un récit dont voici le résumé : (Quelle est cette enveloppe mythique, quels sont ces ornemens dont il faut dépouiller le texte des évangélistes pour arriver à la vérité historique, et qui sont ici évidemment assimilés aux fables débitées sur la naissance et la mort de Romulus, et sur d'autres grands hommes de l'antiquité ? Il ne peut être question que des premiers chapitres de saint Matthieu et de saint Luc, et en général de tous les faits miraculeux racontés dans les Evangiles.) Jésus naquit sous l'empire d'Auguste, de parens galiléens, qui tenaient à la famille de David. Doué de facultés éminentes de l'esprit et du corps, et qui se développèrent de fort bonne heure, pénétré d'un profond sentiment de religion (Act. X. 38.) et d'ailleurs versé dans la connaissance de l'Ancien-Testament et de tout le savoir judaïque de son temps (§ 44.)—(dans le paragraphe auquel le lecteur est renvoyé ici l'auteur cherche à établir que l'assistance divine dont les prophètes ainsi que Jésus-Christ ont joui, consistait uniquement dans le genre d'inspiration qui peut être attribué à tous ceux qui annoncent des vérités dignes de Dieu et salutaires aux hommes, et que Sénèque et Marc-Aurèle assignent à tout homme de bien,) il se voua à l'état de rabbin. Les rabbins étaient des hommes qui allaient de lieu en lieu, en instruisant soit leurs disciples particuliers, soit tous ceux qui voulaient les entendre. (Il existe un livre publié en Prusse, dans des intentions pieuses, et dont le titre dit plus que tous les plus longs développemens historiques ne pourraient apprendre à ceux qui aiment à douter encore de l'empire des opinions rationalistes en Allemagne ; le voici : *Jésus-Christ fut-il autre chose qu'un simple rabbin de campagne Juif ?*) Dans cette carrière où il s'appliqua surtout à combattre avec chaleur les traditions des Pharisiens et leurs subtilités, ses actions et ses discours lui attirèrent une si haute renommée, que plusieurs le prirent pour le Messie (§ 50.) que les Juifs d'alors désiraient ardemment ; (dans ce § 50. Wegscheider s'efforce de décréditer toutes les prophéties de l'Ancien-Testament, et soutient que Jésus-Christ ne se les appliqua que par une sage condescendance aux opinions reçues parmi les Juifs) et lui-même, persuadé par quelques déclarations de l'Ancien-Testament, en vint à être convaincu qu'il était en effet le Messie, et qu'il était envoyé de Dieu pour instruire les hommes ; ce qui s'accordait avec l'opinion qu'on avait conçue de lui, et que la providence divine faisait sagement tourner à l'accomplissement de ses desseins. (Qu'était donc cette persuasion, si non une illusion dont il se berça, et à laquelle coopéra, dans des vues bienfaisantes, la divine Providence ? Beau rôle à faire jouer à l'un et à l'autre, à Dieu et à Celui qui en est la parfaite image ! Rôle digne de la Vérité suprême, et de Celui qui est lui-même le chemin, la vie et la vérité !) Bien qu'il n'enseignât autre chose à ses concitoyens qu'un mosaïsme épuré, (le mosaïsme épuré, voilà donc selon Wegscheider à quoi se réduit l'Evangile du Fils de Dieu !) et qu'il appuyât sa prédication de l'exemple d'une vie émi-*

nement vertueuse et sainte, il rencontra cependant des ennemis puissans, aux complots desquels il échappa quelque temps par sa fermeté, mais finit par succomber. Condamné à mort par une populace furieuse, il fut attaché à une croix. Il en fut enlevé dans un état de mort apparente (littéralement : AYANT TOUT L'AIR D'UN MORT,) et revint à la vie le troisième jour. Il revit encore ses disciples plusieurs fois, et leur déclara de nouveau son projet de fonder et de propager une religion nouvelle; après quoi IL LES QUITTA ET ILS NE LE REVIRENT JAMAIS. (Peut-on dire plus clairement que, dépouillée de son enveloppe mythologique et des ornemens que l'imagination y a ajoutés, réduite en un mot, par la saine critique, à ses faits indubitables, l'histoire de Jésus-Christ n'offre plus les miracles choquans de sa résurrection et de son ascension * ?)

Mais, en voyant un théologien considéré professer ouvertement le désaveu de toute intervention immédiate de Dieu en faveur de l'établissement du christianisme, et consigner cette persuasion dans un écrit rédigé d'office pour servir de fil aux étudiants qui suivent ses cours dans une des universités allemandes les plus distinguées, siège des institutions admirables fondées par la piété des *Franke*, des *Canstein*, etc., pour l'affermissement et la propagation de la foi au Rédempteur des hommes, on revient, avec un étonnement redoublé, à la question déjà soulevée : comment un pareil changement a-t-il pu s'opérer, en un si court espace de temps, dans un pays où les âmes sont naturellement si religieuses, la discussion si réfléchie et si patiente, l'adoption de nouvelles doctrines précédée d'un examen si sévère et si compréhensif ? Nous croyons pouvoir expliquer cet

* Voici le texte même de ce curieux passage : *Historia Jesu Christi, ad exemplum narrationum similium ex antiquitate ad nostra tempora conservatarum, philosophicè et criticè tractata, indubitato docet, Jesum fuisse hominem, nec nisi humanâ sorte esse perfunctum. Sublato enim velamine isto mythico, et remotâ quâvis exornatione poeticâ, quibus singula eventa et facta, quæ de Jesu in libris N. T. tradita sunt, obvoluta cernuntur, hâc ratione vitam ejus paucis adumbrare licet : Natus est, Augusto imperante, a parentibus galilæis, Davidicæ stirpi affinis. Maturè jam eximii animi corporisque dotibus, intinque sensu religionis instructus (Act. x. 38), et librorum V. T. cognitione, omnique ævi sui eruditione judaicâ (§ 44.) imbutus, Rabbiorum qui peregrinando discipulos aliosque auditores edocebant, muneri se dicavit; quo fungens, dum Phariseorum potissimum traditiones atque argutias acriter impugnaret, dictis et factis insignibus mox ita inclauit, ut pro Messiâ (§ 50), tunc temporis a Judeis quam maxime desiderato, a pluribus haberetur, sibi ipse, nonnullis V. T. effatis potissimum adductus, de hâc Messianâ suâ dignitate, et de munere doctoris divini, a Deo ipso sibi concesso, ad æqualium notiones accommodatè, Providentiâ divinâ hoc sapienter ita moderante, firmiter persuaderet. Quamvis virtutis et sanctitatis studio excellentissimus non nisi puriorem doctrinam Mosaicam popularibus traderet, et sui ipsius exemplo commendaret, plurimos tamen nactus est inimicos potentissimos, quorum insidiis fortiter adversatus postremò succubuit. Capite damnatus a plebe insanâ, cruci affixus est; sed cùm, mortuo simillimus, inde sublatus esset, tertio die in vitam rediit; et postquam discipulos aliquoties convenerat, eosque de consilio suo novum religionis institutum stabilendi atque propagandi demò certiores fecerat, ab iis secessit, nec unquam ab illis visus est. Wegscheider, Dogm. § 121.*

étrange phénomène par l'organisation de l'instruction publique et l'état de la Société en Allemagne, en insistant sur la nécessité de ne pas confondre la marche ascendante de l'esprit humain avec les mobiles traits de la physionomie morale d'une époque transitoire.

La nation allemande a, pour ainsi dire, une existence plus contemplative que les autres peuples civilisés de l'Europe. Possédant une langue mère qui se plie à toutes les créations de la pensée, et qui, dans ses racines encore vivantes, rappelle incessamment aux esprits la genèse des idées déposées dans les mots par des hommes méditatifs, et leur en rend, sans beaucoup d'efforts, présente la généalogie, les Allemands se vantent avec raison sous ce rapport d'une plus grande ressemblance avec les Grecs qu'on n'en remarque chez d'autres peuples, et s'attribuent la même aptitude aux abstractions métaphysiques qui a enfanté tous ces systèmes hardis et subtils qui ont illustré les écoles d'Athènes et d'Alexandrie. Mais il manque aux Allemands ce contrepoids aux essors de la spéculation, cette garantie contre la domination exclusive qu'elle aime à exercer aux dépens des autres facultés de l'âme que les Grecs trouvaient dans un ordre de choses éminemment pratique, et dans des communications de tous les momens avec leurs concitoyens de toutes les classes. La plus grande partie du jour se passait en entretiens et en participation aux mouvemens de la vie publique. Le penseur qui, dans la solitude, avait construit des théories profondes ou séduisantes, ne pouvait échapper à l'épreuve presque instantanée de leur solidité, que leur faisait subir le frottement de la vie active.

Les savans allemands sont en général privés de cet avantage. Leur situation et leurs habitudes les conduisent à un travail solitaire qu'ils poursuivent pendant des années, même pendant toute leur carrière, sans qu'ils rencontrent dans leur relations le moyen de mettre à l'épreuve la force du fil qu'ils ont filé dans leur laboratoire isolé, la bonté de la toile qu'ils ont tissée avec une merveilleuse industrie. Ils vivent, si l'on peut s'exprimer ainsi, dans leur coque; et, rattachant à leur trame primitive tout ce que dans la suite leur offrent une expérience extrêmement bornée et des études à la vérité consciencieuses et variées, mais faussées par leurs vues de prédilection, ils perdent la faculté de juger leurs propres conceptions, et d'apprécier la valeur des objections qu'on leur oppose.

Une autre circonstance mérite l'attention du philosophe qui cherche dans l'état de la société l'explication des qualités caractéristiques de la littérature d'un peuple. Les Allemands n'ont jusqu'ici joui d'aucune liberté politique qui leur fît prendre une part effective aux affaires du pays, et au règlement de ses intérêts. Pour se dédommager d'une privation qui pèse sur les âmes, et laisse dans les esprits supérieurs un vide qui demande à être rempli, il ne leur restait que l'activité idéale, les attraits de nouvelles combinaisons spéculatives, les jouissances d'un empire intellectuel, à défaut d'une influence directe sur la chose publique. Il s'est formé ainsi en Allemagne deux ordres d'existences parfaitement distincts, et plus ou moins soustraits à une véritable action mutuelle; le monde civil, réel, et le monde littéraire. Dans celui-ci, l'habitude de se livrer à la licence de l'imagination, et aux spéculations les plus hardies, a été prise, tolérée, approuvée, sans que les classes dominantes en conçussent de l'inquiétude,

et sans que les classes studieuses pressentissent les conséquences de ces reconstructions de l'édifice du savoir humain, sans cesse renouvelées sur nouveaux frais, et se doutassent des dangers qu'il y avait à remanier ses bases par besoin purement théorique, en se flattant de s'en procurer de plus profondes, tandis que loin de les rendre plus solides, on creusait une fosse sous l'ancien édifice.

Ajoutez à ces circonstances, que ce ne sont pas les gens du monde, leurs goûts, leurs encouragemens qui ont créé ni même essentiellement modifié la littérature, c'est-à-dire la sphère des idées et des jouissances intellectuelles qui font la vie de l'esprit et du cœur de l'élite de la nation dans le silence du cabinet. La littérature est presque uniquement l'ouvrage d'hommes appartenant à l'enseignement universitaire et aux professions qui exigent beaucoup plus de savoir et de talent d'analyse que de connaissance du cœur humain. Etrangers aux habitudes du grand monde, et dépourvus du tact pratique et du sentiment d'indépendance que donne le maniement des affaires publiques, les écrivains allemands, auxquels leur nation doit les ouvrages et les doctrines qui font sa gloire et ses délices, n'ont pas, comme les auteurs classiques de l'antiquité et ceux de la France et de l'Angleterre qui, pour la plupart, se sont formés au sein de relations actives, et dans une lutte instructive avec le monde réel, sut se préserver de ces écarts du jugement et du goût que l'homme isolé évite difficilement. L'existence des Allemands en général, à plus forte raison celle des gens de lettres, est plus domestique que sociale; menant une vie toute de pensée ou de sentimens intérieurs de l'âme, et favorable aux rêveries spéculatives, ils ne trouvent point pour leurs idées ce contrôle qui en est à la fois la pierre de touche et l'appui, et que le commerce social et le frottement de relations variées offrent seuls.

Voilà plus qu'il n'en faut à l'observateur réfléchi, pour lui inspirer de la défiance contre tous les systèmes de morale et de religion mis en vogue dans une contrée où les besoins de l'homme doivent être si incomplètement connus et si mal appréciés par ceux qui sont auteurs ou juges du plus grand nombre de ces systèmes. Dans la règle, on ne saurait nier que la littérature ne soit l'image assez fidèle de l'état de la société. Il faut convenir aussi que la littérature allemande a, depuis plus de trente ans, offert un spectacle qu'on retrouverait difficilement à une autre époque de l'histoire et chez une autre nation. Enthousiasme sans foi, scepticisme non pas calme et scrutateur, mais hostile contre les vrais intérêts de l'homme et allié au dégoût de la vie, anarchie dans les principes fondamentaux, absence de tout point de ralliement, désordre dans les idées, penchant pour le bizarre et le fantastique, raison tour-à-tour ivre de sa puissance ou désespérant de sa portée, cherchant son triomphe tantôt dans l'anéantissement et tantôt dans l'apothéose de notre nature, ici dans une espèce de suicide digne d'un fakir, là dans une autonomie plus que stoïque, tels sont les traits qui se détachent en forte saillie du fond des productions les plus populaires des derniers temps.

On ferait néanmoins grand tort à la nation, si on croyait y voir sa véritable physionomie morale et l'expression de son état social. Encore un coup, il y a, par les raisons que nous avons indiquées, prodigieusement de factice et de transitoire dans les doctrines et les livres qui ont exercé de l'empire sur l'opinion.

Et, pour nous renfermer dans les limites de la science qui nous intéresse plus particulièrement, tandis que les plus célèbres théologiens, les chefs de l'enseignement universitaire, se plaisaient à ravalier les documens de la révélation au niveau des monumens profanes de l'antiquité, qu'ils en révoquaient en doute l'authenticité, contestaient l'interprétation reçue lorsqu'elle contrariait leurs vues, ou n'hésitaient pas à accuser d'erreur l'écrivain sacré, lorsque le sens qui condamnait leur opinion était trop clair pour s'en débarrasser par des tours de force exégétiques ; tandis que tous les journaux accrédités leur servaient de véhicules et de prôneurs, le gros de la nation, avertie par une voix secrète qui la rappelait à une religion plus appropriée aux maladies de l'âme, et la majorité des pasteurs qui ne sauraient, à la longue, méconnaître ce qui peut seul guérir ces maladies, repoussaient d'instinct cet énervant et incohérent rationalisme. Long-temps ils manquèrent de chefs et d'organes. Toutes les bouches de la renommée, tous les moyens d'opinion, toutes les tendances du public lettré étaient pour les adversaires des doctrines évangéliques.

Le petit nombre de sentinelles vigilantes qui, aux dépens de leur réputation littéraire et philosophique, sonnaient l'alarme et signalaient les pétitions de principes, les erreurs, les contradictions dont fourmillaient les systèmes des nouveaux docteurs, ne réussissaient pas à désenchanter les nombreux partisans du néologisme ; ils ne parvenaient pas même à se faire des auxiliaires actifs parmi ceux qui, dans le secret de leur âme, applaudissaient à leurs efforts, et ils ne recueillaient guère d'autres fruits de leur courage que la conscience d'avoir rendu témoignage à la vérité. On ne s'étonnera pas du peu de succès de ces hommes aussi savans et habiles que pieux et fidèles, si l'on considère qu'il ne s'agissait de rien moins que de remettre en honneur ce que non seulement les journalistes et une foule d'écrivains en vogue, mais des moralistes distingués, des publicistes estimables et le vulgaire des gens de lettres n'avaient, depuis un demi-siècle, cessé de représenter sous le jour tour-à-tour le plus ridicule et le plus odieux, comme l'œuvre de la superstition et de l'ignorance, une source de dégradation, un obstacle aux progrès de la saine morale et un instrument de l'obscurantisme ligé avec la tyrannie contre l'émancipation de la raison humaine.

Imposant à leurs nombreux lecteurs cette condamnation de l'ancienne foi comme les arrêts de l'opinion, éclairée par des recherches aussi complètes que scrupuleuses, les feuilles périodiques les plus répandues réagissaient sur les auteurs d'ouvrages théologiques. Comme il est arrivé pendant la révolution française, dans un autre ordre d'intérêts, les éditeurs, les propriétaires, les principaux rédacteurs de journaux, presque tous amis ou adhérens des néologues, exercèrent une influence tyrannique sur les écrivains. Leur critique hautaine et moqueuse les troublait, enchaînait leur liberté et prescrivait d'avance le résultat de leurs recherches aux théologiens qui redoutaient ces sarcasmes et ces dédains.

Tous les travaux de l'érudition, toutes les spéculations d'une philosophie aussi imposante par la profondeur de ses vues que séduisante par des résultats en apparence favorables au développement du sens moral le plus pur et du sentiment religieux le plus élevé, toutes les puissances dont le levier était entre les mains des chefs d'opinion dans les sciences comme dans la littérature, beaucoup de

membres des hautes administrations, semblaient conspirer contre les dogmes vitaux de l'Evangile, en secondant les efforts des exégètes qui visaient à rationaliser le christianisme. Répugnant à admettre dans le Nouveau Testament un élément irréductible pour la raison, les plus illustres d'entre les théologiens et les critiques qui régnaient dans les écoles stigmatisaient l'exégèse favorable à la foi évangélique, comme n'étant que l'esclave d'une orthodoxie routinière et l'instrument docile de l'ancienne dogmatique, tandis que c'était eux dont les opérations exégétiques manquaient entièrement de loyauté. L'état d'hostilité où s'était mis le siècle contre tout ce qui n'émane pas de l'esprit humain livré à ses propres inspirations, cachait et cache encore aux yeux de tant d'interprètes savans, ce qu'il y a de déloyal dans leur mode de procéder en exégèse. J'appelle *loyale* l'exégèse qui accepte, sans chicane et sans atténuation, ce que des recherches bien conduites, et poussées jusqu'aux limites des ressources et des données dont la critique dispose, lui ont présenté. En opposition à cette véritable exégèse qui en mérite seule le nom, il y en a une autre qui, pour être *systématique* et pour aboutir à des interprétations très-divergentes, n'en est pas moins déloyale. Lorsqu'elle demande à ses procédés un sens des saints Livres conforme à l'analogie de la foi telle qu'elle est établie dans une Eglise et par une confession de foi, je ne vois pas en quoi cette partialité serait plus condamnable que le travail de l'interprète qui vise à obtenir des explications favorables à la suprématie absolue de la raison. L'une et l'autre de ces exégèses demandent à leurs procédés un résultat de prédilection. En s'efforçant de faire disparaître tout ce qui choque la prétendue saine raison du théologien philosophe, en cherchant à éliminer tout ce qui ne sort pas des entrailles de la pensée humaine, l'exégèse *amortissante* est tout aussi systématique et corrompue que celle qu'on accuse de ne vouloir trouver dans la Bible que les dogmes d'une Eglise.

Ramener l'exégèse sacrée à cette loyauté parfaite, à cette soumission sans réserve au produit de recherches consciencieuses, n'était pas chose facile, n'était pas, disons le franchement, l'œuvre de l'homme seul. Pour obtenir ce résultat il fallait que les esprits s'ouvrirent à la lumière, les cœurs au sentiment de la misère et du néant de la raison déchuë. En une matière si haute et si ardue, il n'y a que la foi qui engendre la bonne foi. Ce n'est pas le sang et la chair qui révèlent à l'homme les choses spirituelles. Aussi renonçons à expliquer ce qui n'est pas du ressort de l'entendement. Ce serait nous replonger dans les ténèbres d'où nous commençons à sortir; ce serait courber de nouveau nos têtes affranchies et relevées sous le joug de cette intelligence sèche et froide, avide de tout comprendre, aspirant à immoler à l'intérêt de curiosité des intérêts infiniment supérieurs, se portant unique exploratrice et interprète de la vérité, tandis qu'elle n'est qu'un des moyens de la saisir, et qu'elle n'est ni la principale ni la plus noble, et encore moins l'unique faculté de l'homme spirituel. Reconnaissons et adorons le souffle divin dans le réveil dont nous sommes témoins, et réjouissons-nous de voir parmi les symptômes de ce réveil, le retour d'un nombre considérable de théologiens profonds et de critiques habiles vers cette vénération pour les saintes Ecritures qui a toujours distingué le chrétien. Ceux qui ont suivi avec attention et anxiété les phases de la littérature théologique en Alle-

magne, pourront seuls apprécier tout ce que signifie et promet la publication de la *Gazette ecclésiastique évangélique* qui a reporté nos souvenirs sur quelques-unes de ces phases ; notre but, en les retracant, a été de mieux faire sentir l'importance morale et religieuse d'une feuille pour la rédaction de laquelle se sont réunis des savans et des théologiens déjà célèbres par leurs travaux, la plupart encore dans la fleur de l'âge et environnés d'une considération méritée par leurs vertus et d'éminens services rendus à l'enseignement académique et aux sciences.

Le principal rédacteur est un jeune professeur de l'Université de Berlin, le Dr. E. W. Hengstenberg. Ses articles se font remarquer par la profondeur des pensées, un tour de phrase vif et spirituel, une franchise courageuse qui ne ménage aucune des idoles du jour, aucune des faiblesses des chrétiens de nom. Il a inséré dans les six premiers numéros de son journal des considérations étendues sur les rapports de l'Eglise romaine avec l'Eglise évangélique, où il nous semble avoir établi, avec la dernière évidence, que les erreurs de l'Eglise romaine découlent principalement de deux sources, de ce qu'elle méconnaît la misère morale et l'impuissance spirituelle de l'homme, et du défaut de confiance aux promesses consignées dans l'évangile, et qui assurent à l'homme le secours de la grâce, lorsqu'il se résigne entièrement à la volonté de Dieu et lui fait l'abandon de la sienne. Ce manque de pleine confiance lui fait chercher un supplément d'appui dans la sacerdoce, chez de prétendus représentans de Christ et de ses apôtres, etc. Nous nous proposons de revenir, dans une autre livraison, sur ce morceau qui est plein d'aperçus lumineux et qui contient des observations frappantes de justesse sur le penchant et l'indulgence des panthéistes pour l'Eglise romaine. Il nous est impossible de ne pas, à cette occasion, manifester tout le plaisir que nous a fait le simple énoncé des thèses défendues en chaire par M. Hengstenberg et quelques-uns de ses disciples à Berlin, en 1825 et 1828, et que nous avons sous les yeux ; nous ne pouvons nous refuser la satisfaction d'en citer quelques-unes :

Pour comprendre l'Ancien-Testament, ce n'est pas assez de la philologie ; il faut encore un esprit éclairé par la gloire de Christ.—L'Ancien-Testament a un sens unique.—La méthode d'interprétation qui convertit en allégorie le sens de l'Ancien-Testament a eu deux causes ; la première est l'incrédulité ; la seconde est le défaut de lumières et l'embarras de quelques défenseurs de la religion.—Qui rejette ou qui dédaigne l'Ancien-Testament doit, par une suite nécessaire, rejeter ou dédaigner le Nouveau.—La saine et véritable interprétation de l'Ancien-Testament ne peut être apprise que du Nouveau-Testament.—Les premiers chapitres de la Genèse sont purement historiques.—Ce qu'on a appelé l'accommodation des apôtres et de Jésus lui-même aux erreurs humaines, est une conjecture sans vérité.—Dans le passage si controversé, Gal. iii. 20, " le Médiateur n'est pas d'un seul, etc.," le premier membre de la phrase se rapporte à Moïse, médiateur de l'ancienne alliance, et le dernier à Dieu qui accorde sa grâce ἀπὸ ὧς (sans l'intervention d'un autre).—Le système de Pélagé exposé, comme il l'a été de notre temps, avec plus de netteté et d'une manière plus conséquente que par Pélagé lui-même, ôte ce qui distingue le christianisme d'avec les religions païennes.—Ce n'est qu'après que l'hérésie arienne eut été étouffée que les dernières traces du paganisme disparurent de la

doctrine de l'Eglise.—Les philosophes qui veulent être plus sages que Christ, sont des idolâtres.—La raison humaine est aveugle pour les choses divines.—Le seul moyen de connaître de Dieu tout ce que l'homme en peut connaître, est de se charger de la croix de Christ et de le suivre.—Cependant, tant qu'il reste en nous des traces du péché, la connaissance des choses divines n'est pas, par elle-même, notre but final; cette connaissance n'est d'aucun prix, si elle ne sert à nourrir et à avancer notre sanctification *.

C'est là de la théologie d'accord avec elle-même dans l'ensemble de ses doctrines et dans toutes ses parties, non pas cet enseignement incertain, incohérent, repoussant d'une main ce qu'il a pris de l'autre, empruntant ses propositions tantôt à la Bible, tantôt à la philosophie, c'est-à-dire, à la raison, qui dans la plus favorable des hypothèses, lorsqu'elle a été incarnée, comme s'expriment ceux qui en exaltent la dignité, a contracté alliance avec les sens, les passions, l'imagination, les croyances contemporaines, et qui nous vante le produit de ces éléments hétérogènes comme des axiomes de la raison divine et infaillible.

L'espace nous manque pour faire connaître à nos lecteurs français les services rendus aux sciences et à la religion par les nombreux collaborateurs de la *Gazette évangélique* de Berlin. M. le Dr Tholuck, successeur du Dr Knapp, à Halle, est, jeune encore, déjà célèbre par de belles recherches sur les sectes mystiques de l'islamisme (de *Sufismo* 1821,) par un ouvrage intitulé: la *Doctrine du péché et du Rédempteur* (1825, 2^e édition), opposé au *Théodore* de M. de Wette, par un fort bon *Commentaire sur l'épître aux Romains*, par une savante *Histoire du Paganisme*, que le Dr Néander a placée en tête de son *Recueil de traits et de morceaux remarquables tirés des Annales du Christianisme*. Il serait superflu de parler du Dr Néander lui-même. On sait qu'il a le premier, dans son *Histoire de l'Eglise*, exposé avec étendue et une supériorité de vues qui laisse loin derrière lui ses devanciers, l'influence morale de l'Evangile sur la vie des chrétiens, dans

* Ad V. T. intelligendum non sufficit philologia; requiritur animus, cui Christi gloria illuxit.—Unus est V. T. sensus.—Ea interpretandi ratio, quæ V. T. sensum in allegoriam convertit, originem primam duxit ab incredulitate, partim à virum in defendenda religione inopia.—V. T. qui aut rejicit aut despiciat, idem eo ipso aut rejiciat aut despiciat necesse est N. quoque T.—Recta V. T. interpretandi ratio e N. T. discenda est.—Prima Geneseos capita nil nisi historiam continent.—Quæ vulgo dicitur accommodatio et apostolorum et Jesu ipsius ad hominum errores, vana est conjectura.—Locus vexatissimus, Gal. iii. 20.: "Mediator unius non est, etc.," priori membro de Mose, antiqui fœderis mediatore, posteriori de Deo, munus gratiæ ἀμείνων (sans l'intervention d'un autre) deferente, intelligendus.—Systema Pelagii, si, uti nostris temporibus factum est, accuratiùs et principiùs accommodatiùs, quam ab ipso Pelagio, proponitur, discrimen inter religionem Christianam et religiones gentiles tollit.—Arianà demùm hæresi devictà, paganismi reliquiæ in ecclesiæ doctrinâ extinctæ sunt.—Philosophi, qui supra Christum sapere volunt, idololatræ sunt.—Ratio humana cæca est in rebus divinis.—Is tantùm ad eam, quæ homini concessa est, Dei cognitionem pervenit, qui Christi crucem tollit eumque sequitur.—Neque tamen, donec peccati in homine remanent vestigia, rerum divinarum scientia per se finis est hominis; quæ ipsa nisi ad sanctitatem ejus faciat alendam promovendamque nullius est pretii.

les premiers siècles ; le même théologien a débrouillé d'une main sûre et habile les systèmes des sectes *gnostiques* dans un ouvrage particulier. On doit au Dr *Hahn* des *investigations sur Marcion*, précieuses par le parti qu'on en a tiré dans la question de l'intégrité de l'Evangile de saint Luc. M. *Olehausen*, professeur à *Kœnigsberg*, a mis hors de doute l'authenticité des trois premiers *Evangelistes* ; il est de plus auteur d'écrits remarquables sur le sens spirituel de l'Ecriture. Le Dr *Heudner*, de Wittenberg, a donné sur l'apologétique des articles dans l'*Encyclopédie d'Ersch*, qui sont pleins de mérite et d'intérêt, et M. le Dr *Bialloblotzki* a publié en latin, sur *l'abolition de la loi mosaïque* (in 4o, 1824, *Göttingue*), un mémoire couronné par la faculté de théologie de *Göttingue*, où cette matière importante a été envisagée sous toutes ses faces avec érudition, sagacité, candeur et dans un fort bon esprit. Nous avons déjà eu occasion de parler d'un des collaborateurs laïques de la *Gazette évangélique*, le professeur *Heinroth*, Dr M. à Leipzig, auteur d'une *Anthropologie* qui fait époque à la fois dans les sciences morales et naturelles.

Les limites qui nous sont prescrites et que nous n'avons déjà que trop peu respectées, ne nous permettent pas d'entrer dans des détails sur le second des ouvrages périodiques consacrés à l'exposition et à la défense des doctrines évangéliques, que nous avons nommés en tête de notre article. Il est publié par le savant et pieux Dr *Steudel*, connu par d'excellens ouvrages de théologie et de philosophie religieuse : il s'est adjoint pour la rédaction de cette feuille, ses collègues dans la faculté de Tübingue, les docteurs *Kern*, *Schmid*, et *Baur*. Ce dernier, auteur d'un docte ouvrage sur les religions de l'antiquité qui ont eu pour objet le culte de la nature, a inséré dans le 1^{er} numéro du journal théologique que nous annonçons, un morceau très-curieux sur l'analogie des idées du Dr *Schleiermacher* avec celles des *Gnostiques*, où il nous paraît avoir complètement prouvé que le Christ de *Schleiermacher* est, comme dans les systèmes de *Basilides*, *Valentin*, etc., un être purement idéal, identique avec le plus haut période du développement du sentiment religieux dans l'homme. Le même cahier offre des considérations fort justes sur la dogmatique du même théologien : l'auteur de cet article aussi profond que solide est le principal rédacteur du journal, le Dr *Steudel*. Il définit avec beaucoup de précision les principes qui séparent les divers systèmes des rationalistes de la doctrine de supranaturalisme, et montre d'une manière lumineuse son parfait accord avec la saine philosophie.

P. A. STAPFER.

THE following supposed address from a Rationalist to all enlightened Christians, is taken from the *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung*, for October, 1827. It illustrates my argument so much that I print it here. I am indebted for the very spirited translation to my brother, the Rev. Henry Rose, Fellow of St. John's.

Already half a century has the contest lasted, which under the name of Rationalists, we have maintained against the antiquated superstition of Unreason, and it is still unattended with any decisive result. The letter is for our adversaries, the spirit is for us, but they have also the vantage-ground of possession, and we cannot hope to make good the cause of original and theoretical truth in the eyes of stiff and obstinate prejudice. Well, then! if they will none of our easy yoke, we will also reject their oppressive one. Let us leave them their Gothic churches and build ourselves temples.

The nobler spirits among the Jews have already adopted a similar measure, and shall we any longer be put to shame by them? by men who offered up to truth and the dignity of reason so great a sacrifice, and set themselves, not without imminent danger, between heaven and earth as free Temple-Jews? we, who may build, as free Temple-Christians, on safe foundations under the protection of Christian Governments, which at all events will not interfere with our proceedings?

The Wechabites among the Mohammedans, in Hindostan the Seiks, and many of the followers of Confucius have already preceded us in this career, and have established a simple belief in God, a Providence and a retribution, abstracted from all positive dogmas, as the foundation of a religious community. And shall not we Christians reach a point, at which the despised Jews, the Mohammedans, the Indians, and the Chinese, have already arrived? Shall there not be among us a communion, in which every friend of light may be secure of meeting only such truths as suit the sound dictates of human reason, and where these truths enter no longer under a veil covered with mysterious hieroglyphics, but stand forth with unabashed countenance in full power and might? And yet alas! in the Christian Church is Reason treated as an heretic, and that too with impunity! As long, indeed, as the Bible, an old book, which is calculated only for its own times, enjoys an unconditional authority, we cannot take it amiss, if those who believe in it, cling with eagerness to certain mysterious and obscure doctrines, (which, to say the truth, *are* found in it,) and if they make salvation dependent on the belief of these doctrines. If men have not the penetration to perceive truths like the following; that any direct communication with the Deity must be classed among impossibilities; that the prophecy of former ages is in its nature only on a par with the spirited harangues of our popular orators; that the very composers of scripture saw only in dark forms and shadowy resemblances, what we behold in the fullest light of human perception, and therefore that every mys-

tery must be subjected to investigation, and must resolve itself into some truth tangible to human reason; men, I say, who cannot perceive things like these, are likely enough to be imposed on by the superstitious authority which this book borrows from its antiquity, and from the decisions of human councils, and they will shut their eyes against the most enlightening truth. Blindness such as this we could scarcely have expected in our enlightened century—but it unfortunately exists. Only very lately have many men of the most profound intelligence, many enlightened university professors and celebrated preachers, been seized with a strange madness, which impels them, turning their backs on all the most important discoveries of our new Psychology, to plunge deep into the study of this old book! they extinguish the torch of clear thought under a chaos of overwhelming feelings, and reject a Kant, a Krieg, a Röhr, and a Wegscheider, nay, even a whole enlightened age, to submit themselves to the authority of a Paul and a John, a couple of well-meaning but prejudiced Jews! They call us profane and unholy, and we return the compliment by declaring them superstitious. Is it possible under these circumstances that the same Church-communion should still embrace both these parties?

No! our inmost sentiments and deepest feelings differ too widely! They fancy themselves frail in their nature and fallen from the original perfection of the human race; we recognise our own dignity and deem it not one atom less than on the day, when man first came forth from the hand of his Creator. Abject humility is the basis of their noble virtue, self-respect of ours. They seek their renovation by the suppression of their natural inclinations, we desire to become nothing else than what we are, and only wish to ennoble the inclinations which actually belong to our nature, and embellish them by cultivation. They place their whole reliance on a Mediator, from whom they expect supernatural assistance, we rely on the natural powers implanted within us, which are fully competent to the attainment of good, and only require direction from the more instructed among us. They lower the Godhead down to their conceptions, as a being susceptible of anger, love and pity; we, with more becoming reverence, endeavour to raise ourselves up to the lofty and infinite Creator of the world. They expect in minute detail the acceptance of their prayers; we also recommend prayer; but only because we deem it from its reflex power a sufficient means of moral elevation. They hold all their weaknesses for sins, and look to their religion as the means of reconciliation with God; we think too highly of man to imagine that a little weakness should be able to tarnish the lustre of his high, lofty virtues, and we believe that where a man's general life is good in the main, he pleases God, and needs no reconciliation. They perceive in their sacraments deep mysteries, and approach them with a dread of which we know nothing, because we look upon them only as lively indications of something higher. They figure to themselves heaven and hell, a resurrection, and a future meeting, in wonderfully varied colours, drawn from the eastern imagery of Scripture; we are satisfied with the perception of the immortality of our spirit, and do not conceive for a moment that this immortality requires the continuance of our personality; far less can we reconcile the notion of a place of torment with the goodness of God. They lay the greatest stress on

Faith, and make it an indispensable condition of Christian salvation ; we are persuaded that God is alike indifferent to all modes of faith, and regards only our actions. They reverence the literal declarations of Scripture as devotedly, as we listen to the decisions of our Reason, and if they will not renounce all claims to Reason, at least Reason in their language and in ours bears two very different meanings. Is it possible to imagine a wider separation ? and is it not folly to attempt, by means of a form of worship and a Church, to preserve an outward Unity while nothing like a real Unity is found in our sentiments and principles ?

There are many religions in the world, and every man believes his own the right. The Christian, the Jew, and the Heathen make equal pretensions to the possession of truth, and, in reality, none of them have any real claims, because all have the same. Reason alone is eternal, she exists since the foundation of the world, and she exists wherever man dwells. She works herself out of all positive religions, just as the sun does out of the clouds that encompass him. Reason again requires but little for her satisfaction—only a few simple conceptions, before which the whole empire of mystery and nonsense falls away. Let us shake hands over her altars. Hardly do we require altars ! in the *understanding* dwells the conception of the Supreme Being whom we adore. Man, however, as he is, still requires something of an outward nature, and we are willing enough to retain the name of Christian, because it reminds us of the gratitude we owe to a great teacher of truth, in whom reason developed itself, after a fashion most remarkable for those times, and who would be still more illustrious if he had not been so grossly misunderstood by his wonder-hunting disciples. He was indeed a splendid man, as intellectual as Socrates, and as profound as Plato ; but more than this—an idol whom we must adore, a Son of God, before whom all the sons of men must fall prostrate in the dust—we cannot recognize in him. We are in nature what he was ; but it is really wonderful in the highest degree, that in his dark age, he should have been able to reach almost the level of the nineteenth century ; and we therefore call him Master and Predecessor. Christ, then, shall be our ideal form of all that is great and good ; and, inasmuch as history has left this form imperfect, and his image stands half hidden in the twilight of antiquity, we shall be able, by throwing over this history the glance of a poetic imagination, to collect all the beams of loftiness and nobility upon his forehead, and thus in him, as in a beautiful personification, to bring out an elevating representation of human excellence. We shall leave the historical Christ out of the question, that we may more freely introduce all the features of the best and wisest of our days into our ideal Christ. Christianity shall stand with us, not so much for what Christ really said, as for all that is true and good and right. We will still be called Christians, inasmuch as the same spirit of enquiry, and the same love of truth which was in Christ, animates us also. But undoubtedly we stand on very different ground from him and his disciples ; and it were a shame for humanity if in 1800 years it had made no advance. Thus our rational Christianity shall distinguish us from every mere sect in religion. In all the religions of the world the enlightened think alike on great matters. A rational Temple-Jew,

for example, is far nearer to us than an Orthodox-Lutheran Christian, who swears by the mere words of the Bible. With the one we are perfectly united in spirit; what separates us is only the difference of nation and some accidents of worship. Whether this partition-wall stand or fall, it is so low that we can stretch the hand over it in heartfelt brotherly love. On the contrary, in our own church, surrounded by persons of unbending orthodoxy, who will scarcely allow us to pass for Christians, who accuse us of shameful treachery against the essential truths of Christianity, who throw it in our teeth, that by empty general conceptions and hollow negations we no doubt unite all, while, in fact, we strangle all the real power and life of religion, amid suspicions like these how evil is our case! We are compelled to be upon our guard not to betray our real sentiments, to force our doctrines into compliance with certain old formularies, which were far better away, and to play off a thousand ambiguities, in order that while we please the enlightened part of our audience, we may not shock the ruder and more ignorant. These painful doublings and windings become grievous to us, nay, they often appear mean and unworthy even to ourselves. Let us separate, and all duplicity is at an end!

Our intentions were really good. We hoped some fifteen or twenty years ago, gradually and silently, through soft and unobserved approaches, by delicate management, and by pleasing and flattering representations, to obtain general reception for an enlightened way of thinking. Then could we have openly come forward with the full truth, and the pure light would not have blinded eyes which had been long and gradually accustomed to its splendour. At first all corresponded to our wishes. The spirit of the times met us with open arms, and felt itself only too blessed to walk in the light of pure reason. But our joy was of short duration, with our zeal for illumination, the zeal for the old prejudices appeared also on the other hand to strengthen itself, and we may see by the experience of the last few years that at present only a very small portion of mankind are fit to receive the full light of pure knowledge. This vehement opposition to our endeavours would lead us to suppose that the great mass of our race requires really something positive, some outward forms and mysterious disguises which may command their respect, and that if we tore these things away with an unsparing hand, religion itself would vanish from the hearts of most men. Otherwise, how could the positive religions so long have kept their place, and a new one have instantly formed itself out of the ruins of the old, if the abstract truths of religion, in which the really instructed mind finds full satisfaction, and which are so easy to discover, had been sufficient for the wants of the multitude? Or how, in a century like our own, could so many cling with such strength of affection to the coarse forms in which religious conceptions are usually embodied? We will not therefore interfere. It might perhaps be an unprincipled thing to wish to shatter with violence the sanctuaries on which, though erroneously, the peace and the hopes of thousands repose. For if they are not enlightened enough to yield to fair persuasion, and throw away their gods for our Godhead—their miracles for our nature—their Mediator for our instruction—their faith for our virtue—their eternal life for our continuity of being, and to indemnify themselves in the exchange by the self-sufficing possession of a lofty and penetrating spirit, we must

fairly avow that we have nothing to offer them in exchange for what they lose. In himself must man find all the fulness of power and intelligence—all that can be bestowed upon him from without, may be rejected without injury to his nature. We claim no creative power; if the spark be not alight, we must leave less endowed natures to their narrow limits. There will still remain a Christian community of the old-fashioned caste, and with all the prejudices which have had time enough in 1800 years to fasten themselves deeply. But we can hardly be expected, out of regard to the narrow minds and unfledged spirits of other men, to place our light under a bushel; neither Spinoza, Hobbes, Hume, Rousseau, Reimar, Kant, nor Boss have done this, and it is a compliment which neither Jesus, Luther, nor Socinus thought due to their age.

We must separate! We, the friends of light, must bind ourselves in closer union; *now* the scattered beams of our illumination are lost amid the general darkness; *then* they might, united, form a sun before whose light all authority, all formal faith and all prejudice would melt away. The first determination of coming forward and standing by ourselves, may perhaps appear bold, but the event would justify our boldness.

The first foundation of our temple must be laid in towns, especially in the larger ones. This is expedient, partly because there immorality is at the greatest height, and therefore an union which takes pure morality for its object, is there most wanted, and will there most easily find acceptance; and partly because in these places the requisite funds for our undertaking can most easily be procured. How many are there among the inhabitants of the largest towns, who, through reading and indiscriminate intercourse with mankind, have shaken off the prejudices of their ancestors, and from the influence of an enlightened philosophy and habits of life refined by arts and luxury, are unable to conform to the rigorous severity of the old system and yet are not without religious sentiments, but feel the necessity of being occasionally excited on these subjects in an agreeable manner. If in our dark Gothic churches, with our old-fashioned sing-song church music, monotonously drawled out, and the liturgy inherited from our ancestors, whose modern patches even still betray the crude belief of older days, this better part of the public finds no true satisfaction, we can hardly wonder at it. Their number may be the smaller, but it is chiefly composed of the more wealthy, and they would no doubt contribute handsomely, if a rational service could be established. In our congregations, we should see drawn together a dazzling circle of well-informed men of distinguished rank and fortune, and as for the ignorant middle classes, a few superficial scholars, and the poorer orders which are naturally inclined to superstition, we would willingly (till their hour comes) leave them their old Gothic churches and their superstitious parsons. With us, elegance of expression, loftiness of feelings, and the rules of the most refined courtesy, would animate every congregation; nor would we confine the office of teacher within so narrow limits; for men of talent who are not divines, and even some of the more highly endowed among the female sex, whose delightful characteristic is a tender religious feeling, might find an opportunity of communicating their sentiments and feeling to a larger circle. Instead of those once loved popular addresses, which border

almost on vulgarity, an elegant rhetorical sort of composition would be introduced, and by the choicest elegance, the hearer's taste for the beautiful, and his faculty of judgment would be formed and improved. We should also take care by softly-melting tones of music, to awaken the slumbering sensations, and elevate them, on the wings of enlightened reason, to the loftiest intelligence and the noblest resolutions. No blind belief but lofty virtue would be the object of our meditations. We must throw around us master-pieces of creative art and beautiful forms, that we may recal our spirits from cold realities into the region of the ideal. Friendship, harmony, and unanimity of principles would bind our hearts together, and in all our congregations we should be enspirited by the noble feeling, that we have escaped all fancies and prejudices and every degrading compliance with forms of faith, and that we belonged, through free choice, to an Union, in which truth, freedom, and substantial good alone bore sway.

Oh! surely, if a man frequented such assemblies as these, his inmost heart must be touched, and the tear of sympathy would tremble on his eye! Perhaps even then, in spite of former experience, the empire of truth would extend its limits; those who are now spell-bound would become weary of their chains; by and by the old Gothic churches would disappear, and instead of them would pleasant temples arise, built after the fair proportions of Grecian art, in green and fragrant fields; the beams of truth would then reach even the workshop of the citizen, and the cottage of the husbandman; the few remaining friends of the old system, who hate the light, must hide themselves with groans in their beloved darkness—and if once the forward-moving giant-steps of clear knowledge could cast down the thin wall which separates the Christian and the Jew, the Parse and the Indian, the Buddhist and the Lama-worshipper, then would one temple erect its holy walls and throw its sacred vault over all the worshippers of Reason; no difference of religion would again separate mankind, and fear, and dread, and superstition, would be names unheard on earth. These are the prospects my eyes behold in the regions of futurity; it must, it must be so hereafter, if our endeavours attain their purpose—and then! we shall stand forth an object of reverential admiration to all mankind, as the first creators of better days, as the brave spirits whose hands laid the foundation-stone of the Empire of Universal Illumination.

To animate all of you, ye friends of light, to this lofty purpose were these lines written. Read them, try them, and let each man do his share to realise such glorious hopes! It may be that sturdy orthodoxy will mock our expectations, and remind us of the experience of the last forty years, in which this has often been attempted, and never effected, but we care not for these taunts! We will not hang in servile dependence on past experience; but go on forwards *a priori*, for that which never yet existed, may exist hereafter, nay, it must come to pass, if we begin our work with the same confidence with which the partisans of positive religion labour for theirs. Therefore take heart. We must conquer! for who can harm us, while we trust to reason!!

WITH respect to Künöl, I find his work getting into such general use (an honour little deserved in my opinion by any particular merit of the author, either as a critic or an interpreter) that I cannot but bring together a few of his opinions and remarks, in order to set the book in the proper point of view. I will take a little of the commentary on St. Matthew. On chap. i. ver. 18, a page and a half is given to the detail of the Rationalists' opinions as to the birth of Christ from a virgin, viz. that it is either false, or a philosophic mythus*, arising from the exalted actions of the Messiah, and from the sense given to Christ's declarations, that he was the Son of God; and that besides, every ancient nation has had heroes born of a virgin, or even without a mother. The note concludes with a reference to Ammon's Dissertation on the Nature of the histories of Christ's birth, and the works of Gabler, Bauer, and Rosenmüller on this point; the three first at any rate prominent among the most violent Rationalists. In ver. 20, 21. we are told that as the Jews referred all unexpected events to invisible ministers of God, the author wished only to show, by mentioning the vision of the angel, that it was by God's providence that Joseph did not reject his wife.

In ver. 22, 23. it is decided *without hesitation*, that the prophecy alleged never applied to Jesus, and is only an accommodation. A double sense is entirely denied by all these writers.

Chap. ii. 1. We have a direct assertion, that if not here, at least in St. Luke the *Gospel of the Infancy* is used as authority, and in the Prolegomena, this 'Gospel of the Infancy,' is said to be derived from traditions in the family of Jesus, preserved because they always expected him to be eminent.

Ver. 17. The prophecy of Jeremiah had not the least reference to the murder of the Innocents.

Chap. iii. 2. We have here an account of all the false notions entertained of the Messiah, and a direct assertion, that Christ accommodated himself to them as far as he could without hindrance to his own doctrine; and so endeavoured gradually to teach them better notions. Then we have a detail of Eckermann's opinions, that the kingdom of the Messiah means only the society of Christ's disciples; that to be received into the kingdom of heaven, means nothing but to profess Christianity; and that by Christ's advent, and judgment, is only meant that happiness in a future life depends on the degree of zeal shown for Christ's doctrines on earth.

Ver. 3. The words of Isaiah, 'The voice of one, &c.' are a promise of the prophet to his countrymen of better times, in which he uses poetic images, that 'God himself will come to assist his people, &c.'

Ver. 11. 'The Holy Spirit' is a fuller knowledge of the heavenly doctrine.

* For a full account of the German Rationalists' style of reducing every thing in Scripture to mythi, see a very excellent book by J. H. Pareau, called 'Disputatio de Rationum, quæ Mythicam Librorum Sacr. interpretationem suadeant, momento ac pondere.'

Ver. 16. The explanation of 'the heavens opening, &c.' is thus given. Jesus after his baptism was praying—it lightened, his face shone with joy, fortitude, and constancy, his words were full of divine wisdom; and from that time he appeared ornamented with the excellent gifts of a teacher, and acted the part of the Messiah; and to complete this (ver. 17.) 'the voice from heaven' was thunder, and the word *λέγουσα* means *declaring* or *showing*, as the thunder was taken by John for a public declaration of God, that Jesus was the Messiah!

These last happy explanations are Künöl's own, that is, not original inventions, but meeting his approbation; nor is any other given or hinted at, as ever adopted by the orthodox.

Chap. iv. The devil was a member of the Sanhedrim, perhaps the high priest, who at intervals tried whether Jesus was the Messiah. It is only fair to say, that Künöl mentions all the other explanations, and states, likewise, that none is wholly satisfactory. In this, however, he says that most of the difficulties attending the others vanish. In ver. 2. we are told, that by Christ's fasting, is only meant that he lived on herbs, fruits, wild honey, &c.

In chap. viii. 4. he gives certainly his opinion against the naturalizing way of explaining the miracles; adding, however, that there may be some occasions where even a sober interpreter may depart from the common methods of explanation, without being attacked for it—though there will be more where he will confess, that he cannot say any thing certain. But that others may judge of the naturalizing style of explanation, he says he will occasionally give specimens, especially from Paulus, *selecting only the probable, and certainly ingenious conjectures*. In the course of this very chapter, he gives two of these probable and ingenious conjectures.

The first is at ver. 27. where Jesus stills the tempest. The author of Remarks on Paulus's Commentary says, that Jesus prayed with a loud voice, and uplifted hands—that all he said could not be heard—and that the disciples supposed from the event, not from any thing they heard, that he had quelled the storm—and so very nearly Krummacher, and Thiess of course.

The second is at ver. 28, and following, where Eichhorn's *ingenious and probable* conjecture is, that as the demoniac fancied that a legion of evil spirits had possession of him, Christ humoured his fancy, and managed so, that he rushed violently on the herd of swine, and drove them into the sea, and then 'when he believed that the evil spirits had gone into the swine, *he recovered his former health*.' Nothing can assuredly be more *easy, ingenious, or probable*. But let us hear another *ingenious and probable* conjecture on this same subject. Schmidt tells us, that when the swine-herds were attending to Jesus, instead of minding their business, the pigs got too near the shore, fought, and many of them fell over; that Jesus took advantage of this, and told the madman, that the evil spirits had gone out of his body into the swine! This, I suppose, is Künöl's own view, for in enquiring, a little below, how Jesus came to do so great injury to the swineherds, he says, that if we admit Schmidt's opinion, Christ will require no apology.

On Matt. xxviii. 3. Künöl settles that the *angel* who rolled away the stone from our Lord's grave was either (1) a mere supposition of the Apostles, who,

as Jews, referred any thing wonderful to invisible agents—or (2) the earthquake—or (3) the lightning which struck the stone, and made it look white and shining, or (4) the flames which broke out in the earthquake! There is a splendid collection of German fancies in Künöl's note on Luke i. 11.

In his note on Luke vii. 12. he says that Michaelis doubts whether the young man was dead—and that Paulus and others pronounce that he was only in a trance. His own insidious addition is that the Jews certainly were in the habit of laying out the dead very soon after death.

On St. Luke viii. 2. where seven devils are said to have gone out of Mary Magdalen, Künöl pronounces *ex cathedra* that she had been mad, and had imagined that seven devils or some uncertain number had been in possession of her.

On Luke xxii. 36. he details (though condemning) a wise opinion of a certain Nachtigall, that our Lord meant to advise his disciples to take a butcher's knife as very useful, as well as their wallet and purse.

On Luke xxii. 43. he gives it as his opinion that Jesus saw no angel, but after his agony came to his disciples and said, 'My agony is over—I am as strong in mind as if I had seen an angel.'

On John xii. 28. The voice from heaven was thunder, which John and the disciples took for a sign from heaven, and John, in wishing to declare *what* it signified, used the words which God would have used if he had spoken with a human voice.

I judge it unnecessary to give further specimens of Künöl's method of commenting. I shall only add, that there is hardly one wild and wicked opinion set afloat by others, which he does not retail, and I can, therefore, have no hesitation in expressing my regret at his work being used by students in divinity. It is convenient for those of maturer judgement, who do not read German, and yet wish to know the Rationalists' style of commenting—but it would be one of the last books I should think of giving to young men, whose minds were unformed and whose knowledge was imperfect.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

P. 2. 'How deep the disease went among the lower orders.' Huffel, a preacher, clearly of Rationalist views, tells us that 'In most towns the mechanics are busy with their trade on Sunday mornings, as by degrees people have forgotten entirely all care of the celebration of Sunday. The afternoon is given to amusements, and so there is no time left for the Church.' Again, 'One hears fathers and mothers of families urge their families to go to Church, but they themselves, who ought to set the example, prefer reading the last newspaper to attending the sermon, or pretend to have other business.' Ueber das Wesen und den Beruf des Ev. Christl. Geistlichen. I. p. 135.

P. 15. *On the oath of subscription.* It would seem that here and there the oath must have been retained, as I observe (by an extract from Dinter in the Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung, for January, 1828. p. 43.) that he says he has sworn *three times* on the symbolical books of the Lutheran church. This may probably refer to oaths still retained at conferring degrees, or admission to office in some places. In p. 11. of the same number too, it is mentioned that in Saxony every clergyman and schoolmaster is bound by oath to adhere to the symbolical books. It would seem too that at Hamburg the oath is retained by the Lutherans. There is a very curious history of a late controversy there in the Evang. Kirchen-Zeitung, for Dec. 1827. A Lutheran preacher named Rentzel, in his zeal against the revival of Christianity there, published a pamphlet, in which he fairly said that all the positive doctrines of Christianity were wrong and mischievous, and allowed that he did not abide by his oath of adherence to the symbolical book, a proceeding which he justified, because we must fear God rather than man. It appears that in the debates which ensued, another pastor named Böckel expressed the same opinions. I must refer my readers to the Journal itself for the proceedings of the authorities of Hamburg on the case. It excited great feeling among all classes and parties.

P. 89. 'Semler recognized as the father and founder of the new school.' I observe that the writer of the life of Eberhard in the French Biographie Universelle (I believe P. A. Stapfer) dates the great out-breaking of Rationalism from the publication of that writer's *Neue Apologie*. He says, that from that time it was no longer a matter which excited any wonder to hear preachers deny the great truths of Christianity from the pulpit.

P. 100. On the notions as to the authenticity, &c. of Scripture, I observe, since the book went to press, that there is a new work by Gramberg published at Leipsic, 1828, and called *Libri Geneseos, &c. secundum fontes rite dignoscendos adumbratio nova*, in the introduction to which all the various fancies as

to the Pentateuch are recited, and a new one offered by the worthy author, who sets out by observing, that every body is now aware that the Pentateuch was written at a time long subsequent to Moses. Ilgen (*Urkunder des erstbuchs Mose. Halle, 1798.*) makes three authors of Genesis, and divides the book into parts accordingly. Eichhorn (*Ernleitung III. p. 1—140.*) supposes two authors and a compiler. Vater (*Commentar. III. p. 393—728.*) says that there were various authors of the Pentateuch at various ages; and that Genesis was perhaps put together by one compiler. Gramberg himself supposes two *Tabulæ Originariæ* put together by a compiler without much alteration, but with some additions from himself or tradition, to bring them well together.

I believe I may add, that none of the historical books are allowed to be more than compilations of a late age; and that even the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are said not to be the works of those whose names they bear.

As to the Psalms, 'David's muse,' says Augusti, 'takes no high flight, but he succeeds best in songs and elegies.' Asaph, in his opinion, far exceeded David and all the other writers in this Anthology.

None of the works bearing the name of Solomon were written by him, though some of the most moderate of the Neologists seem to think that sayings and doings of his may form the ground-work of them. Esther is an historical romance, and Ruth was written in order to make David appear to spring from a good family. I have already shewn how the Neologists speak of Isaiah; if any one wishes to see a full display of the Neologistal opinions, let him consult Augusti's *Grundriss einer historisch—Kritischen Einleitung ins alte Testament*, 2nd Ed. Leipsic, 1827. Jeremiah is not in his original form at all events. All Ezekiel, from chap. xl. is spurious. Daniel was put together in the time of the Maccabees. Eichhorn conceives there are ten fragments, put together by two compilers. As to the minor prophets, all is confusion. Some, for example, say that Obadiah copied Jeremiah, and some exactly the reverse. Some say that Obadiah was written after the destruction of Jerusalem.

In the New Testament I find that De Wette doubts the genuineness of the Epistle to the Ephesians; and that Schmidt (*Einleitung. II. p. 253.*) decides against that of the 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians.

P. 174. l. 8. 'This wretched mass of abomination was offered to the young.' It is curious that Vater, one of those who went the farthest, expressly mentions in his *Chronological Tables*, that about the year 1772 many practical books of religious instruction for the young, appeared 'not strictly dogmatical.'

Page 148, note, line 15, *after* kingdom, the following passage was omitted by a misunderstanding with the Printer.

Eckerman fairly says that he cannot find a single prophecy in the Old Testament, which clearly refers to Christ; and that every one commonly referred to the Messiah is of doubtful interpretation! Döderlein, or rather his editor, (*Instit. Theol. Christ. II. p. 221.*) tells us that *many* recent Theologians have

coincided in this opinion, and he quotes Ammon's *Entwurf einer Christologie A. T.* (Erlangen, 1794.) Konynenburg. *Untersuch. über die Weissag.* (1795.) Bauer's *Theologie des A. T.* (Leips. 1796.) p. 366, and others. Add Bahrdt, *System. Theol. Luth.* p. 48, note G. Döderlein is himself inclined to reject a great many of the prophecies, but does not go these lengths. His whole section (§ 228. p. 215—218.) is worth reading. 'Wegscheider says that Christ accommodated certain prophecies to himself; that his disciples elevated his character too much; and that he appears only as a man, when his history is stripped of its mythical and poetical clothing. Staudlin *Gesch. Nat. und Supern.* p. 305.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF GERMAN WRITERS ON DIVINITY.

*In this Table T. means Professor of Theology. M. Minister. * supposed to be still living.*

Names.	Birth.	Birth-Place.	Employment.	Works.	Death.
REIMARUS.....	1694	Tennstadt.....	T. Leipsic.....	Fragmente, 1773.....	1768
ERNESTI.....	1707	Osnabruck.....	Preacher.....	Institutio, 1761.....	1781
JERUSALEM.....	1709	Triebss.....		Betrachtungen, (4th edition,) 1773.....	1789
SPALDING.....	1714	Halle.....		Gedanken über den Werth, &c. 1761....	1804
MICHAELIS.....	1717	Hamburg.....	Preacher at Halle for a short time.....	Philalethie, 1764.....	1791
BASEDOW.....	1723		Pastor at Berlin.....	Harmony, 1766.....	1790
BÜSCHING.....	1724		{ Pr. of Philosophy at Göttingen, M. at {		1793
SEMLER.....	1725	Saalfeld.....	{ St. Petersburg.....	Versuch, 1757, Institutio brevior, 1765....	1791
LESSING.....	1729	Kamenz.....		Fragmente, 1773.....	1781
MENDELSON.....	1729	Dessau.....		Vet. Test. 1785—1794.....	1786
DATHE.....	1731	Berlin.....	Pr. of Hebrew at Leipsic.....		1791
NICOLAI.....	1733	Leipsic.....	T. Helmstadt.....	Lehrbuch, 1764, Rel. der Vollkom. 1792	1804
TELLER.....	1734	Lauban.....	T. Leipsic.....	Epitome Christianæ Theologie, 1789....	1792
MORUS.....	1736	Halberstadt.....	Preacher at Charlottenberg.....	Apologie, 1772.....	1809
EBERHARD.....	1739			{ Briefe u. d. Bibel, 1792, Ausführung, {	1791
JACOBI.....	1743	{ Bischoffs Wer- }	Pr. of Biblical Philosophy at Erlangen, M.	{ 1784—93.....	1792
BAHRDT.....	1741	{ da in Misnia }	Preacher at Weimar.....	Geist d. Hebr. Poesie, 1767, Briefe, 1785	1803
HERDER.....	1744			Horus, 1783.....	
WÜNSCH.....	1744			Einleitung, 1729.....	1812
GRIEBACH.....	1745	Bilzbach.....	T. Halle and Jena.....		

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF GERMAN WRITERS ON DIVINITY. (Continued.)

Names.	Birth.	Birth-Place.	Employment.	Works.	Death.
STORR	1746	Stuttgart.....	Court Preacher at Württemberg.....	Opuscula Theoll. 1789, Lehrbuch, 1813..	1805
DÖDERLEIN	1746	Windsheim	T. Jena.....	Institutio Theologi, 1780.....	1792
ECK	1751		{ Lecturer on Biblical Criticism at Göttingen	Versuch. Berlin, 1795.....	1827
EICHORN	1752		T. Helmstadt.....	Lineamenta, 1793.....	1809
HENKE	1752		T. Kiel.....	Predigten, 1786, Kommentar, 1804.....	1810
THIESS	1752		T. Wittenberg in 1784, then at Dresden..	Versuch, 1781.....	1812
REINHARD	1753	{ Hohenstrauß, } { in Sulzbach }	T. Göttingen	Ideen zur Kritik, 1791.....	1828
STÄDLIN	1761		T. Heidelberg	{ Exegetisch-Krit. Abhandlungen, 1789, } Kommentar, 1800.....	•
PAULUS	1761		T. Göttingen		•
AMMON	1765	Bareuth.....	T. Göttingen, 1793, Preacher at Dresden		•
ROSENMÜLLER • ..	1768		Pr. of Oriental Languages at Leipsic....		•
KRUMMACHER	1768		T. Duisburg, Preacher at Kettwig.....		•
MEYER	1768		T. Erlangen.....		•
KELLE	1770		Würdigung d. Mos. Schriften, 1811.....		1816
VATER	1771	Altenburg.....	T. Königsberg.....	Kommentar, 1802, Letter to Plank, 1822..	1826
SCHMIDT, of Giessen	1772		Archdeacon at Kiel.....	Die 95 Theses, 1817.....	•
HARMS	1778		T. at Basle.....	Beiträge, 1806, Theodor, 1822.....	•
DE WETTE.....	1780		T. at Berlin	Commentatio, 1813, Entwurf, 1815.....	•
MARHEINEKE	1780		T. at Jena.....	Universal Kirchen-historie, 1806.....	•
SCHOTT	1780		T. at Berlin	Bibl. Realwörterbuch, 1820.....	•
MARHEINEKE	1780				•
WINER	1798				•

• N.B. The elder Rosenmüller died in 1815.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF GERMAN WRITERS ON DIVINITY. (Continued.)

Of some I can only give yet more imperfect accounts.

Names.	Birth.	Birth-Place.	Employment.	Works.	Death.
TÖLLNER.....			T. Frankfurt on Oder.....	Die Göttliche Eingebung, 1771.....	1774
STEINBART.....			T. Frankfurt on Oder.....	System der reinen Philosophie Zell. 1778..	1809
BAUER.....			{ Pr. of Oriental Languages at Altdorf, }	{ Critica Sacra, 1796, Hebräische My- }	1807
LÖFFLER.....			{ and Lecturer on Biblical Exegesis }	{ thologie, 1802..... }	1816
KNAPP.....			Superintendent in Gotha.....	Kirchliche Genugthuung's-Lehr, 1796..	1825
ROHR.....			T. Halle.....	Scripta Varii Argumenti, 1806.....	•
DE WETTE.....			Superintendent in Weimar.....	Briefe über Rationalismus, 1813.....	•
			T. Baale.....	Beiträge, &c. 1806.....	•

The following writers are, I believe, still living, and in the discharge of various situations in the Church and Universities :

GESENIUS, DINTER, BERTHOLDT, AUGUSTI, TZSCHIRNER, WEGSCHEIDER, BRETSCHNEIDER, KAISER, ZERRENNER.

ERRATA.

- Page 46, note, line 11, *for* Thurlock *read* Tholuck.
- 90, — 17, *for* was *read* has.
- 92, — 11, *for* these *read* their.
- 100, note, — 3, *for* it *read* the statement.
- 113, — — 15, *before* the *insert* to.
- 113, — — 17, *dele* is.
- 119, — — 8, *for* But there were many of the German divines
of this Rationalist period who went much farther,
and who impute *read* But several Rationalists of
this period went farther and imputed.
- 166, — — 20, *for* Handbuchi *read* Handbuch.
for Studum *read* Studium.
for Glan- *read* Glau-
- 173, note 2, line 4, *for* just quoted *read* quoted just below.
- 185, — 20, *for* effects *read* effect.

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